



# THE INDEPENDENT

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WEATHER: Mainly dry

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## fashion

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# Now Tories fear a Blair revolution



**Anthony Bevins**  
Political Editor

John Major yesterday warned the country that it risked the midsummer nightmare of a Labour landslide, opening the way for Tony Blair to overturn Tory success with the politics of full-blooded Socialism.

Fresh from the triumph of the Wirral South by-election, the Labour leader yesterday appeared at his party's Welsh conference, in Llandudno, with new MP Ben Chapman, 56, a former civil servant.

Mr Blair said there was a new-found trust in New Labour, "the one nation party of politics" ... Wirral South is "a political uprising against the Tories deep in their heartlands." — Tony Blair

chance. Mr Blair urged the Prime Minister: "For heaven's sake, in the interests of the country, stop the dithering."

Faced with the 17-per-cent swing to Labour in Wirral South, the Tory reaction was confused, with some

"In a few weeks' time," he said,

"there is a new trust in New Labour, 'the one nation party of politics'" ... Wirral South is "a political uprising against the Tories deep in their heartlands." — Tony Blair

ministers confidently saying they would win it all back in an election most two months away on 1 May.

But others warned of the revolutionary threat posed by Mr Blair's Socialist party to the family, community and country.

Delivering both messages at the same time, Mr Major said the by-election marked the end of the

"the people of Wirral will have the chance to vote again, and so will the rest of the country, and that decision might change the face of Britain."

"So the battle is still to be fought. Does Britain change course? Does it move to the policies of socialism? Or, does it stay in the policies that have made it successful over the last few years?"

However, Mr Major then added: "If we had voting like last night, there would be a Labour government with a clear majority, able to do what it wished, without let or hindrance".

On the basis of the Wirral South swing, Labour would have a majority of more than 290. Some of Mr Major's senior advisers are warning that a Labour majority on that scale would deliver more than 100 fully-fledged Socialist MPs into the Labour ranks in the Commons, with all the risks that would entail."

The risk of talking up the Labour threat is that it might add to Labour credibility and further depress Conservative morale, at a time when even some ministers believe that the party is doomed.

The evidence for that pessimism

can be seen in Westminster's up-and-running campaign for the next Conservative leadership contest, which

is built on an assumption of defeat. Government had long ago given up governing, its complacent reaction to Wirral South showed that it had also given up listening.

"They dismiss it as a protest vote

of no significance and carry on," he said. "Arrogant, out of touch, squabbling already about who should be the next leader, that is today's Conservative Party." Labour's Chief

Whip, Donald Dewar, said: "Major seems to have lost the plot. It is clear that John Major has been up all night and, what's more, his morale has hit rock bottom. Nothing else can hit

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## significant shorts

**EU postpones decision on citrus fruit restrictions**

A European Union committee which is debating whether to impose trade restrictions on citrus fruits has failed to reach a final decision.

The Committee on Plant Health will wait until its next Brussels meeting in a month's time to decide whether to introduce a ban on fruits from South Africa and South America, from where Britain gets its entire summer citrus supply.

The Ministry of Agriculture is fighting sweeping restrictions and British producers are angry that other member states support a ban which would give Mediterranean citrus growers control of the European market.

Southern European fruit is harvested in the winter and the proposed ban, sponsored by Greece, would lead to chronic shortages and high prices of citrus in British shops this summer.

Doug Henderson, chief executive of the Fresh Produce Consortium, said: "We will not allow them to creep this through in carpet slippers."

Ian Burrell

**Mummified body found in cupboard**

Police called to a routine domestic dispute found a mummified body of a nearly naked man in a cupboard under the stairs, a court heard yesterday. The badly decomposed and maggot-infested body of 51-year-old Jeffrey Brown, wearing only an anorak, vest and socks, had been in the cupboard since his death five months earlier. Nottingham Crown Court was told.

Cheryl Godward, the resident of the house at Smeatons, Nottingham, and a friend of the dead man, told police she left him at her home with two prostitutes. Judge John Hopkins jailed Godward, 29, for four years after she admitted obstructing the coroner. The judge said that because of Godward's actions in concealing the body, it had been impossible to establish how the former miner met his death.

Godward said when she returned Mr Brown was either unconscious or dead. She put him in the cupboard and nailed it shut. The authorities were only alerted when, five months later, police were called to a domestic dispute and were met by a "pungent" smell.

**New lease of life for Brian**

Councillors at Swansea yesterday agreed to lift a 17-year ban on the Monty Python film *The Life of Brian*.

They decided that the movie – a spoof on the Jesus Christ story and condemned as blasphemous by some church leaders when it was first released – could be screened in the city in aid of Comic Relief next month.

In 1980 councillors voted 22-15 to refuse the film a licence.

**Car thieves take a day off**

A police force was celebrating another success for its "zero tolerance" anti-crime campaign yesterday – 24 hours without a car theft.

Cleveland Police's three month offensive to clamp down on all kinds of offending, no matter how trivial, has already produced a string of benefits and the car thieves' day off is seen as another milestone. The fresh breakthrough came during the 24 hours of Wednesday when, according to police records, not a single car was taken in Middlesbrough, long regarded as one of the nation's auto crime capitals.

On Thursday there were three car thefts – but even that was not totally bad news in a town which averages seven such thefts a day.

A special crackdown on burglary in the force area led to a 37.7 per cent decrease in the number of incidents last month. Over a four month period 1,214 burglaries have been detected, with 945 arrests and property worth £167,875 recovered.

**BT museum to close**

British Telecom is to close the shutters on its national telephones museum, blaming falling attendances and commercial pressures. The central London site houses some 800 exhibits from the UK's dominant role in the development of telephones and telegraphs from the early 19th century to the most modern fibre optic technology.

Despite free admission the museum attracted just 20,000 visitors last year and will shut for good on 1 August. Four staff will be redeployed or take voluntary redundancy, while the remaining two senior employees will try to find a new home for the world's largest collection, which includes a warehouse near Heathrow airport filled with tens of thousands of items. BT insisted it remained committed to managing its heritage. Staff were said to be "very sad" about the decision.

**'Stowaway' reluctant to leave prison**

A judge yesterday expressed astonishment that a fireman should be allowed to "stowaway" in Brixton Prison, south London, for nearly a week after becoming bored with life on the outside.

Judge Jeffrey Rucker said he could not understand why David Watson should want to ask for a further spell of bed and board at Her Majesty's pleasure, and expressed similar puzzlement that the authorities there should find him a cell.

When prison officials realised the firefighter was on bail and that they were holding him illegally, he was quickly escorted to unwanted freedom.

"I must admit this has its humorous aspects. But I assure you that we are treating this matter most seriously," said the judge.

**MSF chief re-elected**

Roger Lyons has been re-elected general secretary of Manufacturing Science Finance, the biggest white collar union in the private sector. Mr Lyons, a Labour Party supporter, defeated the Communist-backed Joe Bowlers, a Belfast regional officer of the union, by 56,510 votes to 26,688 – a margin on two to one.

Barrie Clement

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## people



Fond farewell: Imelda Marcos mourns her husband as his body arrives back in Manila

**Imelda's red letter day is no cold comfort for Ferdinand**

**S**he may be the proud (and shameless) owner of the world's largest collection of loafers, sling-backs, stilettos, sandals and associated footwear, but Imelda Marcos can still claim familiarity with that most unwelcome feature of modern life – the final demand.

To anyone who has ever been the unhappy recipient of a red letter in a small brown envelope, the news that even the former First Lady of the Philippines is unable to settle her electricity bill may offer a crumb of comfort. But uniquely, it will not be merely the fish fingers that spoil when Imelda's deep freeze is disconnected; the late President himself will feel the heat under his starched collar.

Since the deposed dictator's death in 1989, he has enjoyed presidential repose in a glass coffin beneath the soft lights of a bespoke mausoleum, in which the cool temperature is carefully monitored, so as to maintain his Excellency's excellence for future generations of Filipinos to enjoy.

But life after death does not come cheap. In fact, the Ilocos Norte Electric Co-operative, which supplies power to the mausoleum, in the grounds of the family mansion at Batac – Marcos's birthplace – estimates that seven years' immortality comes to about \$214,500 (including tax).

Trouble is, Imelda's a bit strapped just now. And with

the billions her husband stole from the nation (and gave to his friends in Geneva for safe-keeping) tied up in an endless cycle of legal actions involving several jurisdictions, the lady's financial embarrassment is not likely to be swiftly resolved.

As the deadline for payment expired yesterday, Romilas Pascual, president of the power co-operative, said: "We have given them [the Marcos family] enough time to pay their bills. We are trying our best to talk to Mrs Marcos but she does not seem interested to settle the problem."

"This is an ultimatum," he added firmly.

Meanwhile, Mrs Marcos, who returned to the Philippines after her husband's death and was later elected a congresswoman, was not available for comment. An aide simply said she was "out of town".

It is not the first time that Mrs Marcos has been left reaching for the candles. Electricity to her mansion was interrupted in April last year, when the family failed to pay arrears dating from before their sudden departure for exile in Hawaii in 1986. But it was restored after several days when a son-in-law made partial payment.

On that occasion, however, the power co-operative spared the mausoleum, in deference to the town's "favourite son" following the emotional pleas of local government officials, still loyal to the old regime.

Adam Leigh

**Stars shine out in tribute to charming Tinker**

an extract from the Royal National Theatre's *Guys and Dolls*. *Theatre critics joined in with the revival* "Sit Down You're Rocking the Boat". Sir David English in his closing speech insisted that none of them would be replacing Jack Tinker. "A hard act to follow, he became as big a star as anyone he wrote about. He was romantic about the theatre but never sentimental."

Tinker would have fought to get a ticket. Dora Bryan sang "Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend". The audience squealed with delight at the 73 year old's high kicks. Dame Judi Dench, deadpan in a pink dirndl and blonde wig, joined Brendan O'Hearn in a comic rendition of "You are 16 going on 17" from *The Sound of Music*. Her fellow theatrical dame, Barry Humphries, gave his version of Sonderhain's "The Ladies Who Lunch".

The afternoon's highlight was

**City firm denies Horlick rumour**

A fund-management company yesterday denied reports that Nicola Horlick, the former City high-flyer, was joining them as an employee.

By Fund Managers, which controls about £250m of investors' money, said it had no plans to employ Ms Horlick.

One of the company's directors, Nick Bancroft, said yesterday that no discussions had taken place with her. "We have not talked to her and she has not talked to us. I've not met her and I don't think anybody else here has either," said Mr Bancroft. "The first we knew about this was when we read reports this morning."

The message was the same from a similarly named City firm, Ely Place Investments. A spokesman denied any knowledge of a deal involving Ms Horlick joining them.

"I've only met her once and that was at a presentation and we did not discuss jobs," he said.

Ms Horlick was dubbed "Superwoman" for her ability to juggle her high-flying job as pensions fund manager at the City bank, Morgan Grenfell, with her role as the mother of five children.

She was ousted from the bank over allegations – which she denies – that she tried to lure her team of staff to a rival fund manager. She hit the headlines after inviting the media to join her as she confronted her bosses at Morgan Grenfell over her ejection from the company.

Ms Horlick could not be contacted yesterday.

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## briefing

**EDUCATION****Children's achievements likely to mirror their parents**

A mother's education is a powerful indicator of her children's likely educational achievements, new research suggests. If a mother's highest qualification is an O-level, then her child has only a 12 per cent probability of gaining a university degree, but if the mother is a graduate, the likelihood of her son or daughter following suit is 67 per cent, according to a study by John Ermisch, Professor of Economics Essex university economics professor.

The link is particularly clear between the achievements of mothers and daughters, Professor Ermisch found.

His research, published in a paper titled *Family Matters*, also found no evidence to suggest that having a mother in employment when a child is 14 in any way reduces educational attainment. Controversial research featured in a *Panorama* programme last month suggested children whose mothers worked full-time suffered educationally. By contrast, Professor Ermisch found that having a working mother may even increase the odds that the child goes on to A-levels and beyond.

*Family Matters*; John Ermisch, *Essex Centre for Economic Policy*.

Researched by Lucy Ward

**WEATHER****Threat of drought ebbs away**

The threat of drought receded as a wet and extremely windy February blew itself out yesterday. Reservoirs are mostly near full – as they should be at this time of year – and groundwater levels have at last begun to rise slowly. Rainfall in England and Wales was more than 36 per cent above the long-term average for the shortest month, following one of the driest Januaries in a record stretching back nearly 300 years.

Rainfall over the six months from September – the period in which the country's water supplies are replenished – has been 80 per cent of the long-term average.

This February has seen three weeks of strong winds, with depression after depression sweeping in from the west. The Meteorological Office said it was the most tempestuous period since the start of 1990, when there was the second of the two Great Storms of recent memory. This time, the fastest gust recorded in the north was at Lewis in the Western Isles (101mph on 19 February) and, in the south, at Lee on Solent, Hampshire (99mph on 24 February).

Nicholas Schoon

**AIDS****Death toll falls in US for first time**

Giving fresh hope in the battle against AIDS, the numbers of deaths from the disease fell significantly in the US during the first half of 1996, for the first time since it was first detected in 1981.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta reported that deaths from AIDS fell by roughly 12 per cent over the six-month period. The decline was registered in all regions of the country, although its extent varied between different ethnic groups. Deaths among whites fell by 21 per cent, for example, but only by 2 per cent among African Americans.

The drop, which compared with a startling 30 per cent decline recently reported by New York City for the whole of 1996, was attributed to various factors, including the recent introduction of promising new drugs called protease inhibitors. Experts also cited improved AIDS awareness programmes and improved access to care for sufferers of the disease.

President Clinton welcomed the figures, but added: "It is also clear that the AIDS epidemic is not over". David Usborne, New York

**HOME AFFAIRS****Inspector warns on jail cuts**

The Chief Inspector of Prisons has attacked proposed cuts in funding at a jail, which he said are "unacceptable" and will result in inmates being locked in their cells for almost 24 hours a day.

Sir David Ramsbottom argued that this would prevent inmates being rehabilitated and learning new skills to stop them reoffending on their release. His outspoken report follows a visit to Gloucester prison, which houses both young offenders and adults. He said the jail faced a cut in running costs of 15 per cent by April 2000.

"It is quite unacceptable for a modern prison to find itself in the position where, by the end of the century most prisoners will be locked in their cells all the time save for small periods on exercise and a little association," he said.

Paul Cavendish, chairman of the Penal Affairs Consortium, commented: "The bleak regime ... would make it impossible to rehabilitate prisoners. It would turn them out of prison much more embittered and more confirmed in criminal attitudes than when they went in."

Jason Bennett

**ROYAL MAIL****It's quicker to stick than lick**

Self-adhesive stamps are to go on sale in Scotland and Northern Ireland in March on a six-month trial, Royal Mail said yesterday. But they are unlikely to be bought by the public during the trial period, as they are being sold in rolls of 100. If they prove successful, they could go on sale throughout the UK to business and domestic customers.

Royal Mail says it is targeting small and medium-sized firms in Scotland with the message, "It's quick to stick". Alex Gibb, Royal Mail's general manager for Scotland, said: "This is probably one of the biggest changes to British stamps since the Penny Black was introduced more than 150 years ago."

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news

# So that was London fashion week. But after all the swagger, who will wear the clothes?



A small army of buyers are now deciphering the trends that will fill shops in autumn

Melanie Rickey

Amid all the glitz, glamour and endless hype of London Fashion Week, which ended yesterday, there have been clothes for real women that will make their way into the shops this autumn. Among them are those designed by Alexander McQueen, the maverick couturier for Givenchy, and John Rocha, the Dublin-based, Hong Kong-born designer whose clothes are pictured. Every day you will have seen photographs like these in newspapers and on television; but are these clothes what we will really be wearing come September?

Many of the clothes – particularly the more extravagant items designed to catch the eyes of the photographers – do not make it on to shop rails. Be-

tween now and autumn an intricate series of events will determine what will be "the fashion", and what will not. Rita Britton, from designer emporium Pollyama in Barnsley, was in London all week buying the clothes her working customers in Yorkshire will want. "What people who read fashion pages don't realise is that half the clothes shown don't even go into production."

A typical fashion show will have between 300 and 1,000 guests. Half of the guests will be press, and will either write about the clothes, or use them in fashion shoots, or use them to buy Liberty, is responsible for buying Hussein Chalayan and Helmut Lang.

For her, the catwalk presentation is incidental, the real decisions will be made in the showroom. "The amount we



Buyers are the designers' bread and butter. Without them, clothing like McQueen's and Rocha's, for example, would remain a fantasy. As well as these two designers, Lynette White, fashion buyer for Liberty, is responsible for buying Hussein Chalayan and Helmut Lang.

For her, the catwalk presentation is incidental, the real decisions will be made in the showroom. "The amount we

buy from a particular designer depends on their performance last year, and we only take risks with new designers if they are exceptional," she said. Yesterday she was writing orders for Rocha's collection which showed on Wednesday. "His clothes sold very well for us last autumn," she explained.

When a buyer selects clothing it must be wearable and sellable, but not necessarily commercial. You will not find an

Alexander McQueen dress in the shops that consists of just a collar with tassels to cover the breasts. Nor will you find a fuchsia pink faux snakeskin jacket by Antonio Berardi. Even though they were shown on the catwalk, they are unrealistic. However, McQueen bummer trousers have sold at Liberty, as have intricate coats by Yohji Yamamoto. The result is something of a compromise. Lynette White said: "We don't aim to

buy watered down fashion that people will easily understand. Our aim is to educate the customer, to give them the ideas and opportunities to wear exciting clothes."

Rocha admitted that he was not a good salesman, but with his annual turnover now approaching £5m and selling to 20 countries, he has hit on a formula. "My designs come from the heart, and fortunately the buying public understands what I'm trying to say. He knows that what he does essentially is to 'put clothes on backs'. But they are truly beautiful clothes."

McQueen's clothes are aimed at a different customer. Lynette White takes a different approach. You will not see McQueen g-string denim shorts or peak-shouldered

breast-baring garments like the ones shown on Thursday in Liberty. She will be buying McQueen's belted cowhide coats, cut-out leather dresses, skin-tight jeans and sharply embroidered suits. "Things are going more and more 'streety,'" she said. "McQueen's show was a breath of fresh air, and proved that it's not important to have the essential black tailored suit anymore. That is not what people want from McQueen."

So, next time you see a model on the catwalk wearing a seemingly unwearable outfit, remember, there is an army of people out there whose sole aim is to translate what they see on the catwalk into something you can wear, and that is true purpose of London Fashion Week, despite all the hype.

Photographs: Ben Elmes

F-f-f-fashion? Far left, an offering from Alexander McQueen that might actually reach the high street and, above, one of his creations that almost certainly will not. Quick change: one of Vivienne Westwood's models, centre, is helped into her next outfit during one of the shows

Hollywood's biggest rascal, Jack Nicholson, talks exclusively to David Thomson

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Hollywood's biggest rascal, Jack Nicholson, talks exclusively to David Thomson

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**IT IS. ARE YOU?**



## A soldier's life is glinting in the bottom of the glass

The Army intends to revive the Napoleonic art of luring new recruits over a pint in the pub.

For the first time in more than 200 years soldiers will be sent out with a brief to enlist young men between 18 and 26 by buying them a beer over a chat in their local.

Over 300 soldiers from the 1st Battalion Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment will be involved in the novel recruitment campaign which begins next Saturday.

They will work in teams of four and go armed with a kit to buy likely recruits a drink.

The regiment has targeted 88 pubs popular with young people in 15 Midland towns which form their recruiting heartland. The towns include Derby, Nottingham, Worcester, Redditch, Burton, Newark and Chesterfield.

The three-week recruitment drive has been approved by the Ministry of Defence and is being closely monitored by other regiments, who may take up the idea if it's a success.

"We are reverting to the old style recruiting methods of skirmishing used 200 years ago when barracks didn't exist and soldiers were billeted in inns which were a very fruitful source of recruits," said Major John Cottrell who is in command of the operation.

"In those days soldiers led by a recruiting sergeant would buy a boy a pint of foaming ale and leave a king's shilling in the bottom of the glass."

"Once the prospective recruit had finished his pint he was deemed to have accepted the king's shilling or enlistment bounty, and the next thing they knew they had been whisked away on a troop ship to fight Napoleon," said Major Cottrell.



Offering the king's shilling: A recruiting sergeant tempts a village yokel in 1855

Mary Evans Picture Library

by profits made from a snack bar the regiment ran during their six-month stay in Bosnia last year.

The regiment – motto "Firm" – was founded in 1694 and many soldiers are being sent to recruit in pubs in their home towns.

The regiment contains 700 soldiers and requires 100 new recruits every year. Officers are hoping this and other projects during the next three weeks will unearth all the recruits they need for the next year.

The armoured infantry battalion is based in Tidworth, Wiltshire and soldiers will spend much of this year training in Canada.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said: "This is obviously a very inventive, localised recruiting campaign which may or may not work."

"It will certainly keep the Army in the public eye in the area from which the regiment raises its manpower."

The battalion performs a ceremony unique to the Army on 20 September each year. A private is allowed to carry the regimental colours to mark the battle of Alma during the Crimean war in 1854 when every officer and sergeant in the regiment was either killed or wounded and the regimental colours were carried into battle by Private Keenan.

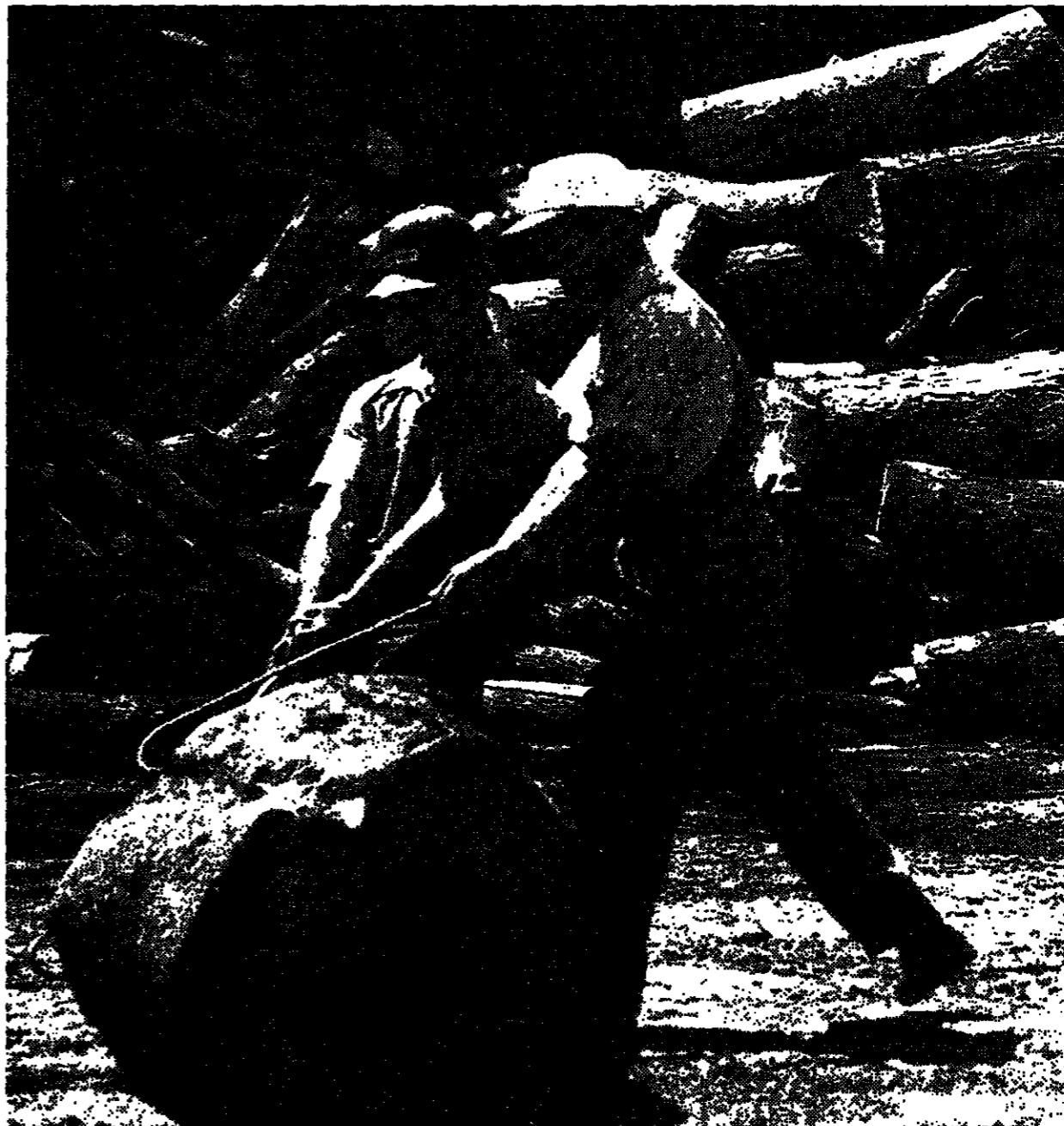
The regiment was the first in the British Army to cross the River Seine during the advance across France in 1944.

The last soldier to be wounded in Northern Ireland before the 1994 IRA ceasefire, Lance Corporal Nobby Clarke, was serving with the regiment in Crossmaglen.

He went on: "It won't be a matter of soldiers walking into pubs and saying 'right the drinks are on the house' They won't be distributing largesse to all and sundry."

"I suspect they will be buying people a pint of beer because it's cheaper than whisky and you wouldn't get so much time to talk to a bloke drinking a short," Major Cottrell said.

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## Lucky God is one of the chosen

David Usborne  
New York

If God has ever considered trading the riches of Heaven for those of Earth, He may have struck lucky. The Almighty has been chosen by American Family Publishers, a sweepstakes organisation, as a potential winner of \$1m (£5m).

In what appears to have been a case of extreme computer eccentricity, a letter of notification was sent by Family Publishers earlier this week to a small Pentecostal church in rural Florida. Rather than being for its Pa-

ter, Bill Brock, however, the letter was addressed directly to God.

"God, we've been searching for you," it declared, insisting that He – alongside millions of others all across the land, including myself – had been "positively identified" as being in the running for the multi-million pay-off.

Like most sane people, Pastor Brock would have normally thrown the envelope away unopened. It was only when his youth counsellor spotted the addressee that he saved it.

The letter inside, adorned

with the usual quasi-official seals and stickers, went on: "What an incredible fortune there would be for God! Could you imagine the looks you'd get from your neighbors. But don't just sit there, God!"

Pastor Brock is holding on to the letter. "I want to consult with my church board, before doing anything crazy," he said yesterday. However, he says that if God were selected, he would play the Almighty for the sweepstakes too.

"I believe in God, but I don't believe in sweepstakes," said Pastor Brock, whose church is

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# £1.7m fines after ferry walkway tragedy

Michael Streeter

A judge yesterday fined four companies a record total of £1.7m over the collapse of a ferry walkway which left six people dead and seven others badly injured.

Two Swedish firms who designed, built and installed the walkway at the Port of Ramsgate in Kent were fined a total of £1m, the port £200,000 and Lloyd's Register of Shipping, which gave the device a safety certificate, £500,000 – the first criminal conviction in its 237-year history.

The fines, which follow conviction on 17 February after a four-week trial, pave the way for the injured and relatives of the dead to sue for massive civil damages, likely to total hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Richard Scorer, a solicitor representing a number of the claimants said later: "Compensation claims have already been lodged. I'm confident they will be settled, particularly in the light of the fines and verdict."

Passing sentence in the Old Bailey, Mr Justice Clarke said: "This was a tragic accident which should never have happened. I hope that nothing like it will ever happen again."

The previous largest fine for a charge under the Health and Safety at Work Act was £750,000, imposed in 1988 following three fatal accidents at an oil refinery. Two Britons were among the six passengers who died when a steel pin holding the walkway in place came loose on 14 September 1994, as hundreds of passengers were boarding the Prins Filip ferry from Ramsgate to Ostend.

Steven Jones, 34, from Manchester, and Jason Dudley, 42, from Epping, Essex, died, as well as two French tourists, one Belgian and an Italian. Seven other passengers were seriously injured as more than a

dozen people plunged 30ft on to a steel platform below.

The Swedish companies, FEAB and FKA, were guilty of "gross errors" of design, said the judge. There was also "gross negligence" on the part of Lloyd's Register – or rather its employees. Port of Ramsgate Ltd, he said, must share responsibility for the collapse of the walkway, although "much less than in the case of the other defendants".

A spokesman for the Health and Safety Executive, which brought the prosecutions, said later that it was "satisfied" with the sentences which hoped would act as a warning.

The Swedish firms, who on legal advice were not represented in court, cannot legally be forced to pay the fines, because they have no UK assets, but it will bar them from trading here.

Patrick O'Farrell, chairman of Lloyd's Register said later: "I am personally extremely sorry that this dreadful accident happened. We wish to express our sympathies to those injured and to the families of those who died."

The Port of Ramsgate Ltd, later said it was considering an appeal against sentence and conviction. "The company does not feel it was culpable for the tragedy which occurred in 1994," said a spokeswoman.

Port Ramsgate Ltd, and the Swedish companies, had denied a Health and Safety Executive charge of failing to ensure the safety of passengers. Lloyd's Register of Shipping, had pleaded guilty to one charge brought under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Port Ramsgate Ltd was also found guilty of a lesser charge under the Docks Regulations Act 1988.

The defendants were ordered jointly to pay costs totalling £223,500.



Digging for victory: Campaigner Gabriel Muies at the entrance to one of the tunnels excavated by Victorian entrepreneur Joseph Williamson, right. Photographs courtesy the Liverpool Echo



## Victorian Swampy challenges the planners

Ian Barrell

A subterranean labyrinth excavated by a nineteenth-century forerunner of Swampy, the road protester, is under threat from a planned housing development.

The extraordinary network of tunnels beneath the streets of central Liverpool was created by Joseph Williamson, an eccentric philanthropist.

A tobacco baron with a bizarre fetish for tunnelling, he spent 35 years hollowing out immense underground caverns and earning the nickname "The Mole of Edge Hill".

One elaborately-created underground banqueting hall is 80ft long and 40ft high, containing entrances to 25 tunnels, some of which extend for miles beneath the city. Now the Mole, like Swampy, is at war with developers, albeit posthumously.

Liverpool City Council has approved plans to build 21 student homes on a site immediately above the main entrances to the labyrinth.

The decision has bewildered local historians, who had hoped to turn the area into a shrine to Williamson's tunnel mania.

The purpose of the burrow-

Williamson's obituary in the *Liverpool Mercury* in 1840 concluded: "No earthly use can be assigned for these catacombs."

But now local people believe that the tunnels, cut from solid rock and supported by brick arches, lead to a brighter future of new jobs and tourist revenue.

Some 200 people, who attended a meeting last week of the newly-formed Friends of

Williamson's Tunnels group, argue that the labyrinth could become a major attraction.

It would be a fitting legacy for the underground honeycomb, whose excavation between 1806 and 1840 provided well-paid work during the slump after the Napoleonic wars.

So grateful were the local families, many of whom were also Williamson's tenants, that they

often referred to the eccentric "The King of Edge Hill."

Williamson's constituency is once again in need of help. The once leafy district now has associations with a different underworld, where Liverpool's armed gangs settle their scores and police unearth caches of illegally-held automatic weapons.

Williamson's once splendid home in Mason Street is now a

derelict garage.

Not that he was ostentatious. He lived like a troglodyte at the rear of his house, sleeping in a cavern and using a cellar as his living room.

His burly figure was a familiar sight on the streets of Liverpool, in a battered beaver hat, patched brown coat, corduroy breeches and hobnail boots. Nevertheless, the Prince

of Wales, on a visit to the city, described him as "the only gentleman in Liverpool".

Williamson had come from humble origins as the son of a poor Warrington farmer who came to Liverpool at the age of 11 to seek his fortune.

He found work with a tobacco company, which he took charge of years later after marrying the daughter of the boss.

The tobacco trade brought him great riches which he invested in his excavations. Historians estimate that the network of tunnels cost Williamson £100,000, equivalent to £25m today.

Local archivist Dave Head said: "The site is worth far more as a tourist attraction than as student accommodation."

But Carol Young, one of the architects planning the student development, said that a rafted design would protect the tunnels from damage. "The fears are unfounded," she said.



Swampy: Runway protest. Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

... while the real one digs in

The environmental protester "Swampy", whose underground sit-in defied bailiffs during the A30 bypass protests in south Devon, yesterday pledged to help build a bigger network of tunnels to try to block an airport's second runway.

Campaigners claim that the £172 million scheme for Manchester Airport,

as it takes.

He said protesters were planning to tunnel under the water table to foil attempts to evict them. Work clearing the site is expected to start in the spring.

Police have warned the campaigners that their tunnels are potentially lethal because of seeping methane gas.

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## news

## Thieves' horde of religious riches

Matthew Brace

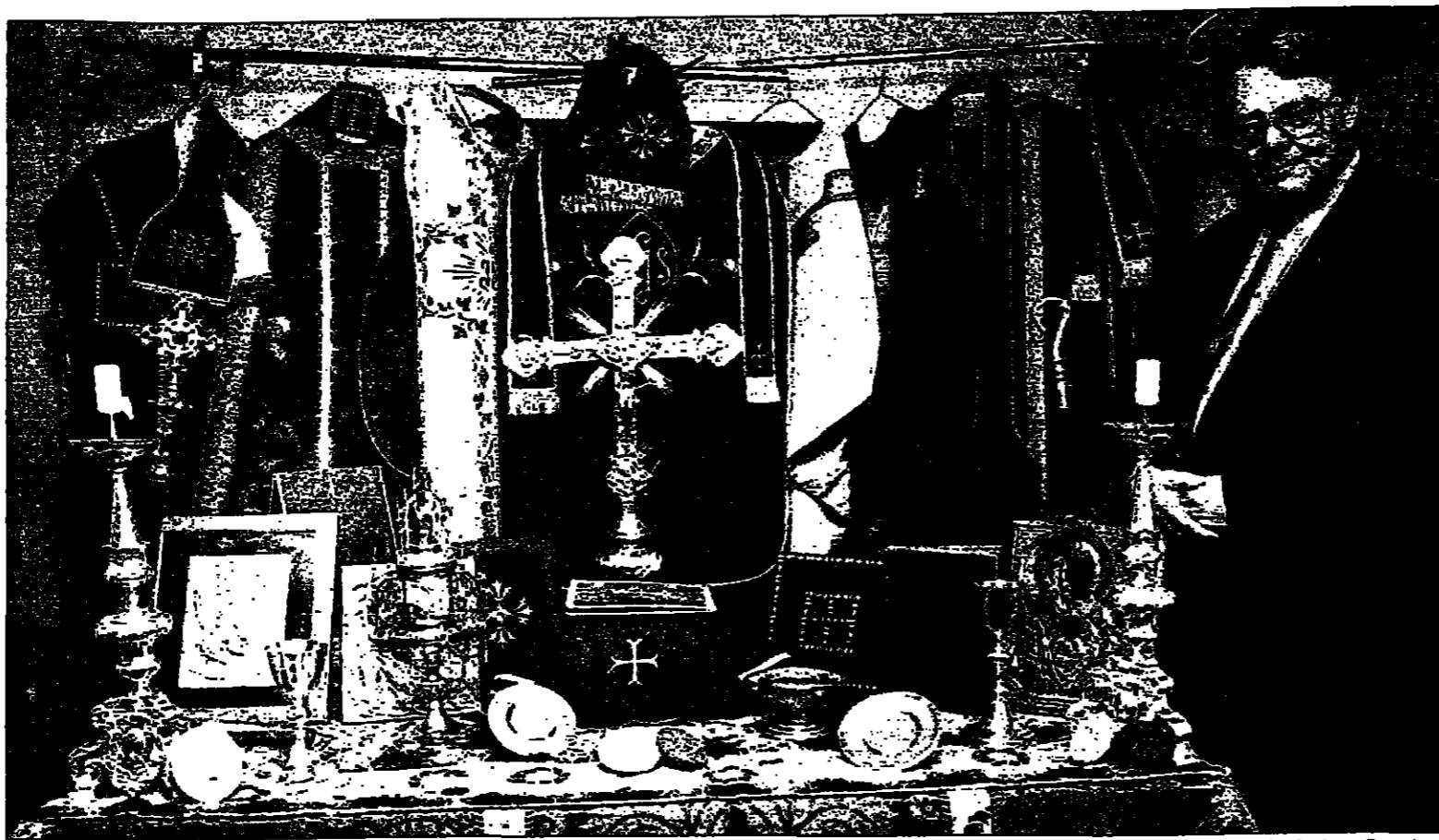
An Aladdin's Cave of altar crosses, candlesticks, communion cups and other religious property stolen from churches and cathedrals around the country has been found in a small north London flat.

Police said the one-bed-room flat was full of ecclesiastical artefacts, including a bishop's miter from Westminster Cathedral.

Elaborately embroidered velvet clerical hoods, stoles, copes and tunics are among the hoard discovered hidden in cupboards, wardrobes and a chest of drawers.

Also present in the small flat were tapestries, 18th century gold communion plates, paintings, Latin bibles, ancient seals, chalices, crucifixes, incense burners and altar banners.

Detective Constable Dave Hobart said: "There's enough religious property from this flat to stock several churches."



Holy hide: Det Con Dave Hobart with the hoard of church property recovered from a north London flat

Photograph: Andrew Dunsire

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## Parents to oppose children's bus ban

**Michael Streeter**

Parents of pupils stopped from using a company's buses because of unruly behaviour have launched a petition to get the ban overturned.

Yesterday pupils of King Richard Secondary School, Portsmouth, whose behaviour has been likened to that of the fictional St Trinian's girls, enjoyed their last trips of the Provincial Bus Company's routes before the week-long ban starts on Monday.

The company said it decided to impose the "trial" ban after an increase in violence and vandalism in which drivers reported windows smashed, emergency exits opened and money stolen.

Colin Yorwerth, the company's operations director, said there had been an incident yesterday morning when two children had thrown coins at a bus window. "I understand the school are looking into it and may have the names of those involved."

He said the firm had lost some customers because of the trouble, but was prepared to risk losing the income from the children to ensure safety. "I am really concerned that somebody could get badly hurt. Safety of the passengers - and of the drivers - is my main priority," he said. The ban, which affects six routes in the Cosham and Paulsgrove area, would be reviewed at the end of next week when they would consider any further action, he added.

Parents have received a letter from the school's head teacher informing them their children will not be able to use Provincial buses next week.

Mr Peter Warburton, said the school had made a great effort to improve pupils' behaviour on buses and had taken disciplinary action against some. In his letter he conceded the ban would affect innocent children but said he supported the decision to try and eradicate "anti-social behaviour".

Parents have claimed the company is overreaching and some are threatening to keep their children off school rather than see them face a long walk.

Margaret Whittaker, 37, from Paulsgrove, said she was planning to start a petition against the move.

"I am really worried. My daughter Tina is 12 years old. It is a 40-minute walk and anything could happen. I am a single parent living with my dad and I can't drive. I will worry myself sick."

The ban does not affect school buses which provide free transport for children travelling from further afield, though the company had reports of trouble on these routes yesterday.



Trouble in transit: Children arriving by bus for what could be the last time at King Richard School in Portsmouth yesterday

Photograph: Tom Pistor

## Giants of computer games to join battle

The two biggest names in the world of computer games consoles have started a battle to win the hearts of the nation's game addicts.

Sony, market leader for the last year with its PlayStation console, yesterday announced a big price cut, the day before rival Nintendo launches a new flagship product.

Sony's PlayStation console will drop in price to £129.99, down from £199.99, from 24 March, nearly a month after Nintendo's N64, priced at about £250, hits the shops.

One industry expert warned that sales of the N64 were likely to be hit by "Buzz Lightyear syndrome", after the Toy Story character that became many children's must-have present last Christmas - only to disappear from shelves in the rush to buy.

Only 20,000 N64 units have been shipped to the UK in advance of today's launch.

"It might well be Buzz Lightyear syndrome," said Marcus Hawkins, editor of GamesMaster magazine. "Price is going to be a major factor in the war between Nintendo and the other manufacturers."

"The Sega Saturn and Sony PlayStation have become very mainstream. There is a lot of expectation and excitement about N64, but I think it will appeal more to the older, hardened games fan than to young kids."

Sony company executives said the price cut was part of an aggressive price war designed to tempt games players away from the N64.

## Lawyer wins police damages

A lawyer who issued formal complaints against detectives and was "maliciously prosecuted" by them is to receive £45,000 damages after a police apology, a High Court judge was told yesterday.

Legal executive Hazel Jones, 33, sued the Chief Constable of Essex for false imprisonment, malicious prosecution, defamation, malicious falsehood and conspiracy for the "anxiety, distress and humiliation" she suffered when she was acting for a client.

The action, launched in January 1994, was settled when the Chief Constable issued her with an apology and accepted the arrest should not have taken place.

Her counsel, Ben Emerson, told Mr Justice French: "In addition, the Chief Constable has offered to pay £45,000 in satisfaction of her claims."

"Her reason for bringing this action was to vindicate her good name and reputation, and to remove any remaining doubts which may linger as to the validity of her arrest and prosecution."

The police chief was not represented at the hearing when a statement read out in court described the "oppressive, arbitrary

"Production of PlayStations" is now running at 1 million units per month. This capacity gives us the opportunity to market PlayStation at an aggressive mass-market price point, bringing in a wider range of consumers," said UK managing director Ray Maguire.

Also in next month, many older PlayStation games titles will drop in price to as little as £20. The move is seen as a direct attack at Nintendo, whose N64 game titles cost between £50 and £70.

A launch party for the N64 was held last night at the Riverside Studios in Hammersmith, London.

Bob Monkhouse compèred the event and the guests included pop groups, television stars from various soap operas and sundry Gladiators.

A spokeswoman for Nintendo said: "It's fair to say that 20,000 (N64 units) on the first day won't be enough, but the volume in sales in America and Japan has been so great that they just cannot make them fast enough. They are now on maximum overdrive to meet the expected sales levels."

Another 15,000 machines will arrive within a week and a further 140,000 by the end of May. The flagship game title is Super Mario 64, selling for £59.99.

Two other games will be available immediately, Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire (£59.99) and Pilotwings (£49.99). A fourth game, WaveRider, will be released later costing £54.99.

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news

## Drug clinic plan gazumped by worried village

Residents of a tiny North Yorkshire village were so horrified at plans to open a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre in their midst that they raised more than £100,000 in three days in a bid to buy the property themselves.

Villagers in Burton Leonard set about raising the cash after hearing that contracts were about to be exchanged on the Crown House nursing home on the village green.

The charity Addiction Recovery Training Service planned to turn the whitewashed property, which is opposite the village primary school, into a centre for 16 ex-addicts.

But after objections to planners failed, the villagers hastily organised a meeting at which they pledged to go without luxuries and hand over their savings in a last-minute attempt to stop the plans.

Within three days more than £100,000 had been pledged by 50 families in the village, which

has a population of 473. They immediately made an offer, which is now being considered, and if it is accepted they hope to exchange contracts by the beginning of next week.

Post office owner Gerlinde Godber said: "This is a very quiet village and we were concerned for the safety of the children and everyone else. It was never Not In My Back Yard – it was just not the ideal spot for it."

"We started raising the money on Sunday and we were in a position to make an offer on Tuesday. It was incredible."

"We had to move rapidly and the whole village pulled together. I'm not surprised we made it. I'm proud to be able to live here."

The villagers plan to sell the property if they outbid the charity, which had been due to exchange contracts yesterday.

Charity spokesman Kenneth Eckersley, 69, said he had writ-

ten to the village committee promising to back out of the deal if they found another buyer and pay the charity's costs which amount to several thousand pounds.

He said: "It's not my intention or the intention of the charity to upset people anywhere – we don't want to frighten ladies or worry young mothers."

"I find the situation sad but at the same time I can't blame the villagers – they're as fearful of the problem as anybody else. People do not understand our business."

"They hear the word drugs and they get very fearful because drugs is the worst problem in our society today. But it's a problem that has to be tackled by somebody somewhere."

Mr Eckersley said that the charity, which is based in Dover, was already looking at other properties in Yorkshire.

Charity aims to revive ancient names for pastures green



Rural reversal: If the Common Ground initiative works, fields could revert to traditional names such as Devil's Dole and Haggis. Photograph: Tom

# Drop the dead dogma

NEW LABOUR'S EARLY PLEDGES ARE

**- cut class sizes to 30 or under for 5, 6 and 7 year-olds** by using money saved from the assisted places scheme

Cost £490 million

Saving £225 million

## It doesn't add up, Mr Blair

The assisted places scheme makes it possible for children from low-income families to attend independent schools. Killing this scheme would achieve nothing. In fact, it would take seven years to phase it out, by which time New Labour would still be £265 million short of the money they need to cut class sizes. (Source: Institute of Public Finance)

Meanwhile they would have damaged the education of up to 65,000 poor children. (The average child in the scheme comes from a family with an income of only £10,900.)

Do these children really benefit? They certainly do. They achieve results up to 3 grades higher at A-level. (Source: London School of Economics)

These tangible results would be thrown away simply because of prejudice against

non-State education. Frankly, this kind of thinking is as out of date as Clause Four. Most Labour voters want success not envy. That's why 55% of them are in favour of the assisted places scheme and only 27% are against it. (Source: MORI)

For the sake of some of Britain's most promising children, help us persuade New Labour to abandon this policy before the election. We have nothing against a New Labour government – just this pointless policy. Please let us pass on your views to your MP. Write to us at Friends of Independent Schools, 56 Buckingham Gate, London, SW1E 6AG.

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## Past returns to reclaim our fields of dreams

Stephen Goodwin  
Heritage Correspondent

Devil's Dole, Handkerchief Croft and Seven Men's Mouth are names of what? Maybe the last contains just a bit of a give-away to ageing campfire singers. Haggis, Skirt and Vicar's Hatchet are three more of the same.

Towns can be forgiven for bafflement at the words. But it would be interesting to know how many agri-businessmen or East Anglian prairie farm managers recognise them as traditional field names.

The environmental charity Common Ground today calls for a revival of field names as part of a move away from intensive farming to a more holistic way of working the land. Midsummer Leys or Saffron Ground could be burnt on to the five-bar gate so that the visitor knows this is a field with a character and history, not just a commodity.

Most farmers will regard the group's *Manifesto for Fields* as an idealised urban vision of the countryside, owing more to John Constable than the production of food for a nation of 58 million. But Common Ground says it is time for a popular debate about fields, how they should be used, what we want them to look like, and whether it is sensible for the taxpayer to be pouring in a subsidy to be rushed off their feet with demand.

Battlefields, fields that have inspired authors, festival fields and field springs should all be revered, along with the poetic names given centuries ago, though time and the plough may have obscured their meaning.

The ones given above translate as follows: Devil's Dole – unproductive or difficult land; Handkerchief Croft – small piece of land; Seven Men's Mouth – meadow with work for seven men; Haggis – place cleared of trees; Skirt – land on a boundary; Vicar's Hatchet – land assigned to the parson.

## Suicide theory over 39-floor fall

Michael Streeter

Police in Brazil believe a 31-year-old British management consultant who fell to her death from the 39th floor of a luxury hotel may have committed suicide.

The body of Katrina Dunleavy, 31, who was on a business trip to Rio de Janeiro for the London-based accountants KPMG, was found by security staff at the five-star Meridien Hotel earlier this week. According to local police, a day before her death, Ms Dunleavy had been removed from the "dangerous" out-of-bounds roof terrace from which she is believed to have fallen.

Yesterday staff at KPMG were shocked at the death of their colleague, who had been with the firm for three years. A spokesman said: "It is a tragic loss to her family and to all her colleagues in the firm. She was a very professional person, she was a good operator and highly thought of. We are saddened by this loss."

The spokesman added that the dead woman, who was single, had been on a normal as-

written history, carved clearings in the wild wood; the accumulation of practical experimentation, invention and subtlety extending over generations. Yet under our gaze this rich combining of culture and nature has been smoothed and sprayed out of existence in half a lifetime."

They want a shift away from the field as a factory, soaked in pesticides and fertilisers, to wildlife-friendly places where livestock can find contentment under a shady tree or crops are grown organically.

Farming should only be subsidised if it produced "whole-some" food, reinforced the cultural importance of fields and improved conditions for farm workers, the group says. And food should be grown for local markets, cutting out the costs and pollution of long journeys.

It is not an anti-farmer manifesto and cites the high suicide rate among farmers who are increasingly isolated on large, mechanised holdings. Nor, according to Sue Clifford, a director of Common Ground, is it impractical. "The BSE crisis has taught us a lot about short cuts and cheap food, meanwhile organic farmers we have talked to are rushed off their feet with demand."

Battlefields, fields that have inspired authors, festival fields and field springs should all be revered, along with the poetic names given centuries ago, though time and the plough may have obscured their meaning.

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Common Ground's manifesto says: "Fields are our un-

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# Court threat to Proctor over shop accounts

Fran Abrams

Political Correspondent

Harvey Proctor, the former Conservative MP, could face prosecution for failing to submit accounts on his shirt shop for the past two years.

Thirteen high-profile Tories, including the Deputy Prime Minister Michael Heseltine, bought shares in Cottonrose. Lord Archer, the former Conservative Party vice-chairman, was also among the investors who helped Mr Proctor to set up his shop in south-west London after he was forced out of Parliament 10 years ago.

When it last published its figures in March 1994, it was £150,000 in debt. Companies House has confirmed that if Mr Proctor does not deliver the past two years' accounts by April 4, he is likely to be prosecuted under the Companies Act. The case would be heard in a magistrates' court where the maximum fine for failing to submit accounts is £5,000. If Mr Proctor does file accounts in time, he is still liable for a possible late payment penalty of £1,000.

Among the other investors in the company are several who have since faced scandals themselves. Tim Yeo, member for Suffolk South, was embarrassed by revelations that he had an illegitimate child, while Neil Hamilton, MP for Tatton, faced allegations that he accepted cash for questions David Asby



Harvey Proctor: 'It has been a struggle to survive'

Billeray, said that he had not submitted accounts for his shop in Richmond because difficult trading conditions had left him unable to pay his accountant. Many other small companies had the same problems, he said.

"It has been quite a struggle to survive. It has not been helped by press comment every six months that we are closing down," he said.

The newspapers treat this company as though it was ICI.

"Take your tanks off our lawn, please," he said.

Mr Proctor left Parliament in 1987 after facing court charges relating to his homosexuality.

Neil Hamilton and his wife Christine, who both hold shares in the shop, were there four years ago when Mr Proctor was attacked by two men who were later jailed for the assault. Mr Hamilton sustained a broken nose when he tried to help his friend.

Other Tory MPs who put money into Mr Proctor's company included Mark Lennan, Boyd, David Heathcoat-Amory, Richard Shepherd, Sir Nicholas Bonnor, Philip Oppenheim and Michael Brown. Another investor was David Lightbown, the former Conservative whip who died last year.

Leapsquare, the public affairs consultancy run by the MP for Welwyn Hatfield, David Evans, also put money into the company.

Mr Proctor, former MP for



Stuck on you: Visitors inspecting a papier-mache statue of the Queen Mother at the Rush on Paper (People-Sized People in Paper) exhibition by Peter Rush at Wolverhampton Art Gallery

Photograph: Joel Chant/Newsteam

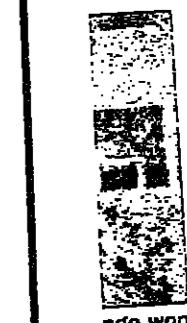
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## No end to beef ban says EU commissioner

Sarah Helm

Brussels

British hopes of securing an early end to the beef ban were dealt another severe blow yesterday when Emma Bonino, Consumer Affairs Commissioner, said the Commission was "not even thinking about lifting the embargo."

Ms Bonino, a sharp-talking Italian who is better known in Britain as Minister for Fisheries Policy, has recently been appointed by the Commission to oversee public health in the wake of the beef scandal. She looks likely to prove a tougher opponent when it comes to lifting the embargo than Franz Fischer, the Agriculture Commissioner.

A champion of individual and consumer rights throughout her life, Mrs Bonino told the French newspaper, *Le Monde*: "It is out of the question to weaken the embargo. The truth is we are not even thinking about lifting the embargo. And we will not be thinking about for a long time."

The commissioner's comments come just four days after Britain submitted new proposals to Brussels for a partial lifting of the embargo, along

with certain assurances for further eradication. Presenting the plan, Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, called on his partners to remember the "Florence agreement", a reference to the much-vaunted deal at last year's June summit. The agreement was presented by the Government as a "victory" and a justification for the "beef war" because it supposedly contained commitments from other European countries to a gradual lifting of the ban.

However, Britain's partners denied that there were any commitments at the time and eight months later they are talking as tough as ever.

The European Commission has no intention of recommending even a partial lifting of the ban until Britain can prove that every possible safeguard is in place. The Commission itself has recently come under fierce criticism from the European Parliament for failing in its duty to monitor mad cow disease in British herds after the first alert in 1989.

Mrs Bonino's new public health post was created in part to defuse criticism from the Parliament and to reassure member states that no such crisis could occur again.

## Media warned on Bridgewater

The senior judge in the Bridgewater Three case yesterday stressed that none of the convictions had been quashed and none would be unless and until the Court of Appeal was satisfied it was unsafe.

Lord Justice Roch was responding to "inaccurate" reporting in the media of last Friday's hearing when the men, convicted 17 years ago of murdering newspaper boy Carl Bridgewater, were released on bail. One of the three, James Robinson, and relatives of cousins Vincent and Michael Hickey were in court yesterday. They heard the judge say that, at the end of the full appeal hearing next month, the court concluded the convictions were not safe, "then we will quash them and the presumption of innocence in favour of all unconvicted persons is re-established".

The judge said most media coverage last week was accurate, but some was not, so it was necessary to reiterate what the court said "in the hope that in future all reports and not merely some will have the accuracy that court reporting demands".

He said the court had stated it would hear evidence from scientific experts indicating that a

confession by the fourth defendant, Patrick Molloy, who died in prison, had been obtained by a trick. If that evidence was accepted, it would lead to the quashing of his conviction.

The court had then said: "It is in our view right that the public, the appellants and the family of the murdered boy should have the opportunity to learn precisely how this fresh evidence came to light, what its significance is and also to know what further evidence there may be." The court would then go on to consider the effects of all this evidence on the safety of the other convictions.

Describing the court's function, the judge said it was not a court of inquiry or royal commission. It was concerned with what went wrong in the investigation and trial and the effect on the safety of the convictions, not with why things went wrong. It would not inquire into, for instance, which individuals were responsible for non-disclosure of evidence, that might have helped the defence, or what other person or persons might have committed the murder.

But the court did have power to refer any evidence of such wrongdoing to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

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news

## British movie moguls line up for the riches of Camelot

Stars come out in force to support film-makers' bids for slice of £156m lottery cake

Marianne Macdonald  
Arts Correspondent

Elton John and Ewan McGregor were among the stars who lined up behind film companies yesterday to bid for a slice of the £156m of lottery money being made available to make British feature films.

Intended to help overcome the fragmented and *ad hoc* character of the domestic film industry, the Arts Council lottery scheme will award up to £8m each year to four "franchises", or consortia, for six years.

The initiative follows a consultants' report which suggested that the Arts Council was "in a unique position to be the catalyst of change" within the British film industry by means of its lottery income.

There is no question of Hollywood-style budgets, however; funds will be limited to £2m per film and the required private funding is unlikely to push that much beyond £1m.

The Arts Council hopes to recoup its grants from film profits—but will plough such income back into more productions.

The bids which went in for yesterday's 6pm deadline included one from Studio Pictures, a BBC-backed consortium led by its former head of single drama, George Faber.



Movie millions: Elton John and Helena Bonham Carter are supporting a film industry bid for lottery cash, some of which would be used to fund productions starring old favourites like Rupert the Bear

It boasts the support of BBC Films and Ewan McGregor, who shot to fame in *Trainspotting*, and who has set up a talent company with his costar from that film, Jonny Lee Miller, to develop opportunities for actors in Britain's film industry.

Also hopeful were UK Filmworks, headed by Mike Newell, who directed *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. David Parfitt, who produced *The Madness of King George*, and Granada

*with a View* and *Howards End*. It says it will make 34 films in the six years.

A fourth consortium, Double Negative, is led by Working Title Films, the successful British production company which catapulted Hugh Grant to fame in *Four Weddings And A Funeral*. Its partners include Revolution Films—formed by producer

Andrew Eaton and director Michael Winterbottom, who made the feature film *Jude*—and *The Jones Company*.

Pathé Pictures offered a heavyweight application boasting producers Simon Channing-Williams (*Naked, Secrets and Lies*), Jake Ebers of Allied Films (*Driving Miss Daisy: Charlot of Fire, Dances With Wolves*),

Norma Heyman (*Dangerous Liaisons*), Lynda Miles of Pandore Productions, (*The Commitments*) and Sarah Radclyffe (*My Beautiful Laundrette*).

Penzance Films accounted for another bid from the consortium including Metrodome Group, the production company responsible for *Leon The Pig Farmer*, and the British directors

Nicholas Roeg (*Don't Look Now, The Man Who Fell To Earth*) and Ken Russell (*Women In Love, Tom*).

The Children's Film and Television Foundation also applied to service "one of the most neglected areas of the British film industry—the children's and family film".

Meanwhile, United Animations wants funding to make feature-length cartoons starring Rupert the Bear, Rumpelstiltskin and Odysseus.

The Arts Council received 400 initial applications. The winning bids will be chosen by its film advisory panel headed by Charles Denton, the BBC's former head of drama group, and announced in May.

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## Bomb fanatic boy locked up for four years

A rebel schoolboy bomb-maker with a "disturbing obsession" with explosives was yesterday ordered to be detained in a secure unit for four years. The 15-year-old, who cannot be named for legal reasons, made and set off a number of devices, and had also booby-trapped his bedroom, Tiverton Crown Court heard.

He had papers relating to the Oklahoma bomb massacre, in which he had a "macabre interest", said prosecutor Geoffrey Mercer. The boy, from the St Blazey area of Cornwall, was sentenced, having pleaded guilty at an earlier hearing to two charges of making an explosive substance and to possessing a prohibited weapon.

He also asked for two other offences of making an explosive substance, and stealing chemicals, to be taken into consideration. Judge Graham Cottrell told the boy: "It is clear from the evidence in this case you have developed a very disturbing obsession with explosives. It is clear at this stage the risk of your reoffending is very high, making it unsafe and wrong to pass a sentence which allows you, at the moment, your liberty."

Mr Mercer said that on 22 July the boy was given a 12-month conditional discharge for setting off a small explosive device outside a nightclub in St Austell. Four days later he set off a homemade bomb in a biscuit tin" on wasteground near homes in Par. A resident said a loud bang "shook the house", which was 15 yards away. There were flames two or three feet high and shrapnel landed in a garden, said Mr Mercer.

The teenager set off another device in Par on 3 August and six days later went voluntarily to the police with his mother, the court was told. Chemicals which could be used to make explosives were taken from his bedroom and destroyed. He told the police he learnt about explosives from school chemistry lessons, and by experimenting.

He "perfected" explosive devices and told the police he had set off four others. The boy also said he had told other youngsters how to make explosives, said Mr Mercer. While on bail, he was stopped by police in Lostwithiel on 16 October, carrying a small bag. He said it contained a bomb which he was going to sell to a man.

An "improvised shotgun" was also found on the boy, said Mr Mercer. A Royal Navy team was called to make the device safe. At the boy's home items for making explosives were found, said Mr Mercer, who added: "One of the drawers in his bedroom was booby-trapped, with an explosive de-

vice fitted to it." The teenager told police the device he had been carrying could "shake a few windows" in the right conditions. He said the booby-trap in the drawer would have caused a small explosion if it had gone off. He collected shrapnel from his devices to see how far they had gone and had tried to make a Semtex substitute, but never found a formula.

Counsel for the defence, Barry van den Berg, said the boy was 14 when he started to "dabble in explosives". He was lonely and had been rebelling for a long time against authority. His actions gave him a "notoriety" among friends, which for him was "heady stuff". He had used his intelligence in a "destructive way", said counsel.

A psychiatrist, Georgina Redding, said the boy, who suffered from a conduct disorder and mood swings, got a "buzz" and "feeling of omnipotence" from what he did. There was a "mis-match" between the boy and his parents, who were in a strict religious sect.

The boy's father told the court his son became "haughty and disobedient" and had taken on the "destructive side" of science.

He said they were a close family but admitted losing parental control in the summer of last year.

## Match-fixing trial jury out on Monday

The jury hearing match fixing allegations against three football stars will retire on Monday to consider its verdicts.

The former Liverpool and Southampton goalkeeper Bruce Grobbelaar, 39, the former Aston Villa and Wimbledon striker John Fashanu, 34, and the former Wimbledon goalkeeper Hans Segers, 35, are accused of being part of a plot to throw games.

Along with Malaysian businessman, Heng Suan Lim, 31, alleged to be the representative of a Far East betting syndicate, they deny conspiring to give and accept corrupt payments.

Adjourning the case until Monday, Mr Justice Tuckey indicated to the jury at Winchester that he had almost completed his summing-up and that they would retire that morning.

The judge, who has spent one-and-a-half days summing up the case, told the jury yesterday that they had seen video extracts of games involving the two goalkeepers and the

Their case was that if money was corruptly given and received, "it does not matter whether the result owed everything, little or nothing to the assistance of the corrupt player".

The jury must reach verdicts on three counts.

The first charge, against Mr Lim, Mr Fashanu and Mr Segers, alleges that between 1 November 1991 and 9 November 1994, they conspired together to give and corruptly to accept gifts of money to influence or attempt to influence the outcome of football matches.

The second charge, against Mr Grobbelaar, alleges a similar conspiracy between 1 November 1992 and 9 November 1994.

Mr Grobbelaar alone denies corruptly accepting £2,000 from Christopher Vincent for improperly influencing or attempting to influence the outcome of a football match or matches.

The hearing was adjourned until Monday.



Guilty: Paratrooper James Burmeister, 21, (left) accompanied by lawyer, Larry McGlothlin, is convicted. Photograph: AP

## Gold casts shadow on Swiss war neutrality

Louise Jury  
Semra

It is the biggest foreign policy crisis in Switzerland since the Second World War. To the outside world, the questions about the fate of Nazi gold have raised fresh suspicion about the morality of Switzerland's secretive banking system.

For the Swiss, the affair has prompted a complete reassessment of their war time history and shattered confidence in their neutrality.

Allegations that their post-war success was based on millions stashed away during the conflict, even that the Second World War would have ended sooner had it not been for Switzerland's willingness to trade with the Nazis, have rattled the confident, logical Swiss and dented belief in what they regard as their good record.

Where they once prided themselves on having accepted a quarter of a million refugees fleeing persecution in the rest of Europe, they now have to explain why they rejected at least 38,000, many of them Jews sent back to the Nazis and certain death.

Flavio Cotti, the Foreign Minister, said this week: "I'm sure ninety-nine per cent of our population which has not learned history has grown up with the conviction that the general attitude of Switzerland during the Second World War was an absolutely correct attitude." Now, he said, they were being asked to come to terms with the "negative aspects".

The initiative has come from the top. The government has appointed a commission under Professor Jean-François Bergier. It will seek, Mr Cotti said, "to re-establish the reality of that time". Professor Bergier sees the inquiry as "an opportunity to acknowledge our past so we can confront the present and the future".

The process is not only academic. Switzerland has shunned formal ties with the rest of the world, rejecting membership of the EEA in 1992 and joining United Nations organisations, but not the body itself. Now it is being forced to reconsider the policy of isolation.

Jacques Picard, a member of the Bergier commission, said the country had "lost its image" and was redefining a new one. "We have to understand that we are part of the international community," he said.

With unemployment, which was previously unknown, now at almost 6 per cent, and one of the slowest growth rates in the OECD, the economic situation is also challenging the isolationism of the past.

But the process is proving difficult. Thomas Borer, chief of the government task force on the assets of victims of Nazism in Switzerland, outlined the clash of cultures between Switzerland and its critics.

The Americans, in particular, accuse the Swiss of dragging their feet while the last Holocaust survivors are dying. Yet speed is not the Swiss way.

"We are basically watchmakers," says Mr Borer. "What we make is a very delicate watch which is going to show us very precise time. To build a watch like that takes several years."

With four different political parties in the seven-member cabinet, the constitution itself has come under fire for delaying a resolution.

"The whole system is very steady and not good at solving anything that isn't an ordinary problem. It's like Swiss history – it is a success story as long as it is business as usual," one Swiss diplomat said.

The big banks, for instance, have just given 100m Swiss francs to a humanitarian fund for victims of the Holocaust. In a poll, only half the population believes the government should also contribute to it. So, rather than risk a referendum, politicians are awaiting initial reports from the Bergier Commission to give them reasons to do so.

**Our Swiss system is like Swiss history – a success as long as it's business as usual**

Many older people find it hard to accept that their war efforts are no longer lauded. Although documents show the Germans assured Switzerland it could escape invasion, the fear of a German attack was very real to those who spent war years in foxholes on the border.

The younger generation has been more willing to listen, though Lili Nabholz, the politician who steered the lifting of Swiss banking secrecy laws to aid the current investigations, fears some are irritated by foreign criticism. There has been a rise in open anti-semitism.

Swiss Jews recognise that the investigations have met with a certain "psychological resistance" from their countrymen. Rolf Bloch, president of the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities, says they are satisfied there is movement towards solving the moral and financial questions of the war.

Mr Bloch is not given to the loud protests of the American Jewish lobby. Yet, he quietly tells stories which his fellow citizens have not wanted to hear.

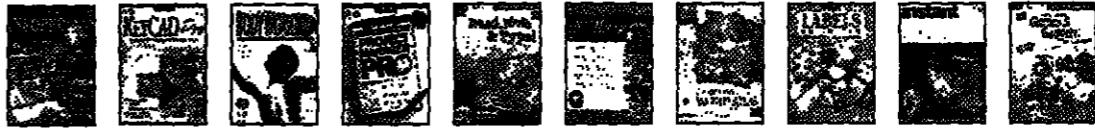
In 1942, when he was 12, a young Jewish brother and sister who had escaped from Belgium were found hiding in Bern. And were taken in. Naively, the Swiss family told the authorities. Suddenly, the police arrived. The teenagers were thrown out of Switzerland and died in Auschwitz.

The Swiss population was against the Nazis. It does not mean they were in favour of the Jews, Mr Bloch said. "That is something we cannot forget."

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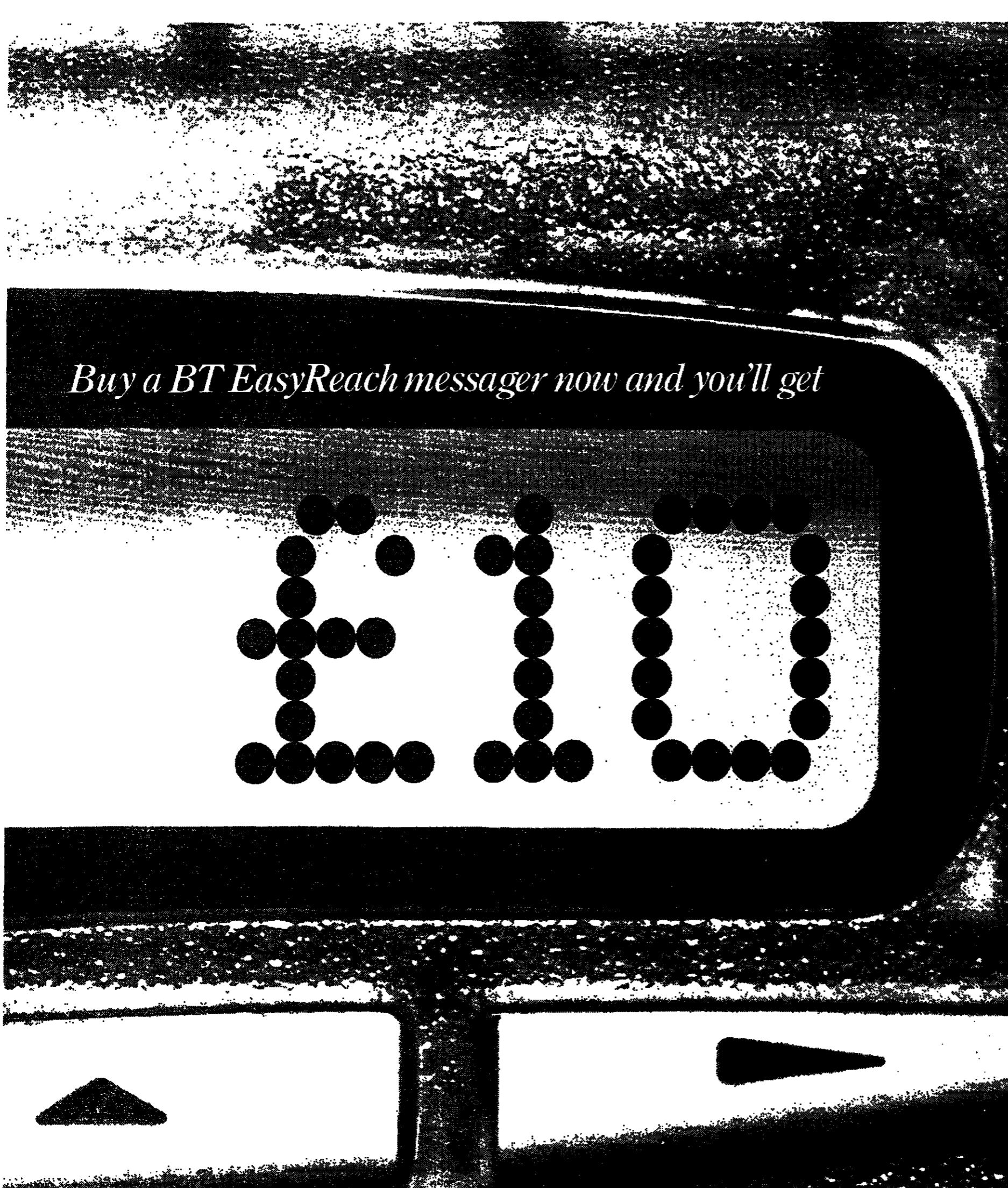
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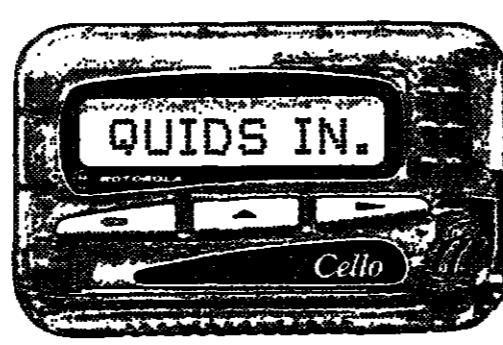
Exposed: Oil-covered baby sea lions sitting on a rock off Punta del Este, Uruguay, following a spill from a Panamanian tanker which ran aground on the nearby island of Lobos earlier this month and which is threatening more than 200,000 sea lions in the area. Photograph: AFP



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SATURDAY 1 MARCH 1997 - THE INDEPENDENT

## Pavement artists have the drop on the City of Light

### PARIS DAYS

Our friend Sandra, an Irish woman married to a Frenchman, says that the *vrai parisien* pedestrian can always be distinguished from the visitor or newcomer. The unwary outsider stares up at the startlingly elegant buildings on every side. The Parisian always looks down. He or she is, from bitter experience, scanning the pavement ahead for dog poo.

Paris has a serious dog problem, more serious, it is said, than any other city in the world. Partly this is because it has more dogs – 300,000 – than any other city. But that is not all. Other cities, including other French cities, have taken aggressive steps to curb this urban scourge. Paris has adopted a policy of, as

it were, *laissez-faire*. It is not illegal for dogs to foul the otherwise impeccable pavements of one of the most beautiful cities known to man.

On my walk to work the other day I decided, in the name of investigative journalism, to measure the extent of the affliction. I counted 18 deposits in the first 30 yards. Walking to school with the children is a one-mile slalom course to avoid what Charlie calls, from grisly memory, the "squishy ones".

Continuing my fearless inquiries, I uncovered several disturbing facts. Dogs leave 20 tons of faeces on the streets of Paris daily (who has weighed them, you ask? We will come to that later). An average of 650 people a year are hurt so badly after slipping on dog shit in Paris that they have to be taken to hospital. This works out at nearly two victims a day; broken collar bones are the most frequent injury.

The City of Paris pays £5m a year to a company, Delcaux, which operates more than 100 machines, resembling golf carts, called *caminettes*. Their job is to scour dog poo from the most affected pavements once or twice a day. (The normal street cleaning is supposed to take care of the guitars.) The *caminettes* make their most intensive rounds just after the morning rush-hour and just after the late film on television. Experience has shown that this is when owners and dogs most frequently resort to the public canine toilets, known to everyone else as the streets.

I contacted the technical director of the operation, Dominique Bellanger, who admitted it was not feasible to get around all the 1,500 miles of Parisian streets daily. His team, he said, concentrates on the "most polluted areas". (It is the Delcaux company which has measured the harvest from Parisian dogs). The *caminettes* do a good job, but, as Mr Bellanger concedes, the expectation that they will pass by encourages fizzy dog owners to use the pavements not the gutters.

We are used to thinking of Britain as a nation of doting dog-owners, but we have nothing on the French. In the Bois de Boulogne on a fine Sunday, Parisians parade in their hundreds around the ornamental lakes, with every conceivable species of mutt, turning the Bois into some vast, open-air Cruffs. The sentimentality which the French rarely bestow on one another is available sometimes for children and always for dogs. Paris, like California, has dog psychiatrists, even dog and cat astrologists. There are 80,000 dogs with private health insurance in France.

Close to my office is a dog shop. In the window are dog mittens, fashionable dog coats, *haute-cuisine* dog biscuits, dog toys – including stuffed animals (pets for dogs?) – and packets of the "finest-quality straw from the Pays d'Auge" (*appellation contrôlée* produce for pets?).

There is not a pooper-scooper in sight. I inquired within. The shop did not sell them: no demand apparently, despite the

300,000 dogs living in Paris.

Over the years' committees have been formed by the town hall to study the issue, scientific studies have been commissioned, and information campaigns have been aimed at dog-owners ('encouraging more *fraternité* and less *liberté*.'

Other French cities have, so to speak, stamped on the problem. Grenoble led the way in the 1980s with instant fines, prosecutions for persistent offenders, even the seizure of pets. At the same time, the city built 120 "sanitary dog spaces" and conducted a permanent civic-awareness campaign.

Similar policies, as well as a tax on dog-owners, were proposed to the city of Paris as long as eight years ago. They were rejected by the then mayor, who said such "répression" would not work and would penalise the old and the poor.

The mayor was, of course, Jacques Chirac, who is notoriously soft-hearted about animals. At one point the future president lectured dog-food

• An average of 650 people a year are hurt so badly slipping on dog shit in Paris that they have to be taken to hospital.

manufacturers on the need to make their offerings conducive to drier and more compact dog poo. He was, it is said, reluctant to do anything which might offend so many thousands of dog-owning voters.

Nothing much is likely to change soon. Complaints about dog dirt are the third most frequent reason for letter-writing to the Paris town hall (ahead of fear of crime). But this has been true for many years now. The Agriculture Minister, Philippe Vasseur, will shortly present a law to parliament on the control of pets. It is aimed mostly at controlling savage dogs such as pit bulls and at the better regulation of cat and dog sales. It also proposes a free, if limited, veterinary service for poorer pet owners. There is no suggestion of a licence or tax to control dog numbers, as some had urged.

Non-dog-owning Parisians should console themselves with the wisdom of the 19th-century poet Gérard de Nerval, who provoked the dog lovers of his day by promenading with a lobster at the end of a pink ribbon. When questioned on his motives, he replied that lobsters "know the secrets of the sea, they don't bark ...".

He might have mentioned at least one other reason, in a crowded city, to prefer a crustacean to a dog.

John Lichfield

## Strikers' threat to Prado show

Elizabeth Nash

Madrid

Spain's Prado museum has launched a spectacular exhibition of European art devoted to sensual pleasure. But the event prompted howls of pain from museum employees, anguished at what they call "conditions of absolute chaos".

Members of the museum's workers' committee interrupted the opening ceremonies this week by whistling and banging drums, and brandishing banners and stickers saying "Save the Prado". They plan a series of protest actions including strikes – although their leader, Antonio Solano, reckons a work-to-rule would be sufficient to bring the museum housing one of the world's finest art collections, to a standstill.

More than 100 sixteenth and seventeenth century paintings, including four splendid Caravaggios as well as works by Titian and Breughel, celebrate the pleasures of the five senses. Workers say the exhibition, "improvised at the last minute", was mounted with unprece-

dented haste, causing disruption throughout the museum. They say the accumulation of temporary displays and major repairs to the dilapidated building will close dozens of rooms.

"For weeks visitors have been tripping over ladders and tool-boxes, as workers have been driven to the limit, shouting to each other, banging, causing disruption that is totally inappropriate in the Prado," complained Alfredo Pincero, a member of the workers' committee and a museum restorer.

Workers who have seen their numbers cut and wages frozen are "totally demoralised", Mr Pincero says. They want some order to be put into the shambolic internal organisation of the flagship of Spanish culture.

It was workers say, "madness" to mount such an ambitious project during major structural repairs.

A spokesman for the sponsoring bank, the BBV, said the exhibition had not figured in its plans for this year but was the result of an invitation by the Secretary of State for Culture, Miguel Angel Cortés.

# Shameful echo of a forgotten holocaust

**Robert Fisk**  
reports  
on a tale of  
past terror  
and fresh  
injustice

For Gaspar Aghajanian, it is a matter of principle. For his wife Astrid, it all goes back to the day 82 years ago when the Turks piled the starving orphans of Armenia on top of each other in the sand and burned them alive.

"My mother saved me from the fire by pushing me under a pile of corpses," she says. "She used to tell me afterwards that when she heard the screams of the children and saw the flames, it was as if their souls were going up to heaven."

Astrid is now 83, her husband 85, but their battle - against another generation of Turks - is contained in a thick file of correspondence in their bungalow home in Shoreham-on-Sea, West Sussex.

No one comes well out of those fading letters and cuttings; neither the Turkish authorities in Cyprus who refused to compensate the Aghajanians for the property looted from their home after the 1974 Turkish invasion - on the grounds that they were of Armenian ethnic origin - nor the Foreign Office which failed to persuade the Turks to pay for their plunder, even though the Aghajanians are full British citizens.

"Deplorable," is how one Foreign Office letter - from Tim Eggar, then parliamentary under-secretary - described Mr Aghajanian's situation in 1985. But it went on to admit that his claim would not be met unless there was a political settlement on the island.

What the Aghajanians lost in Turkey - Persian carpets, furniture, an ancient coin and stamp collection, photographs of relatives since massacred, a piano, family letters and a large library of valuable books - would only amount to a few thousand pounds. The Turks originally tried to prevent the couple from receiving compensation for their retirement home in northern Cyprus - failing only because Mr Aghajanian was paid for the property before the Turks discovered that he was Armenian. But for Astrid and Gaspar - their families refugees from the Turks twice in the same century - the refusal to compensate them for their possessions remains a mark of indignity and shame.

Their story explains all. Astrid's grandfather, grandmother and uncle



Waiting: Gaspar and Astrid Aghajanian at their home in Shoreham-on-Sea, Sussex, where they continue to fight for compensation from the Turks

Photograph: Andrew Hasson

were shot dead at the start of the 1915 Holocast against the Armenians, the Turkish massacre that killed at least a million, and a half Armenians in what is now Turkey and Syria. Astrid retains faint memories of the long trek over the desert which the women and children were forced to make by Turkish police officers - robbed, raped, starved and burned to death across hundreds of miles of sand.

"At a village one night, my father, who had been deported, came to see us. He told my mother that he thought he was being allowed to say goodbye, that he would be shot with the other men. I remember my mother told me that my father's last words were: 'The only way to remember me [is] to look after Astrid.' We never saw him again."

On the long march south, Turks and Kurds attacked the column of women and children, carrying off girls for rape and forced marriages.

"My mother would run from one end of the column to the other each time she saw them attacking us," Astrid says. "My grandmother died along the way. So did my newly born brother Vartkes. We had to leave him by the roadside."

"One day, the Turks said they wanted to collect all the young children and look after them. Some women, who couldn't feed their children, let them go. Then my mother saw them piling the children on top of each other and setting them on fire."

My mother buried herself and me under another pile of dead bodies. Even today, I cannot stand to be in darkness or to be on my own."

Astrid's mother, who was only 18, eventually carried her to a Bedouin camp and, after reaching Aleppo - with the help of a Turkish officer -

was shortly afterwards to become a magistrate. Fleeing the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948, both took refuge in Jordan - where Gaspar secured British citizenship - and then moved to the still British-administered colony of Cyprus.

Gaspar Aghajanian worked for 22 years for the United States radio-monitoring station on the island, re-

she married her cousin and moved to the newly mandated territory of Palestine, now ruled by the British.

In 1942, Astrid met Gaspar, whose own Armenian family had lived in Palestine for generations and who

tiring to the bungalow the couple had built for themselves on the newly independent island.

"We never had any problems with the Turkish community," Astrid remembers. "Our housemaid was Turkish and we got on very well."

But when the Turks invaded in 1974 - after a Greek-Cypriot coup d'état - the Aghajanians were on the run again from their traditional oppressors.

"We thought at first that the Turks would be disciplined," Gaspar says. "They were no longer Ottomans - and they were a Nazi force. Then we heard of a British couple who'd been beaten up in their home. That decided many of us that we should leave."

In a convoy of cars - the British actor Edward Woodward was flee-

ing with them - the Aghajanians made their way to the British sovereign base area at Dhekelia, and thence to Britain.

British residents who managed to return to Turkish-occupied Cyprus reported that the Armenians' home had been looted.

"Front door broken and house searched by army. Contents strewn everywhere..." said one report. The British Government refused to take responsibility for British property. Another letter to the Aghajanians said that "Alas, so far as I can judge, you must regard the contents of your house as entirely lost. The house itself, it seems, has been taken over by one of the newly arrived Turkish police officers, who has apparently cleared it and burned all papers."

Gaspar eventually received £15,000 for the house. But when he demanded compensation for the couple's possessions, he discovered

from the Foreign Office - in the words of Tim Eggar's letter - that "the Turkish Cypriot authorities had... enacted legislation to exclude claims made by those persons who were deemed to have Greek or Greek-Cypriot connections. They have now extended this exclusion to cover claims by persons deemed to be of Armenian descent."

"We were never Greek Cypriots and never asked for Greek-Cypriot passports," Gaspar Aghajanian says.

"We were full British citizens but we were refused compensation on grounds of our ethnic background. And nothing has been done to correct this disgraceful state of affairs."

When he noticed in 1990 that Margaret Thatcher was to visit Turkey for ceremonies marking the battle of Gallipoli - on the very day that commemorates the start of the Armenian Holocaust by the Turks - Mr Aghajanian wrote to his MP, Richard Luce, to complain.

The British Government came the reply from Francis Maude, then Foreign Office minister of state, "regard the loss of so many lives (in the Armenian massacres) as a tragedy..."

But he continued, "we have long considered that it would not be right to raise with, or attribute to, the present Turkish government acts which took place 75 years ago during the time of the Ottoman empire."

All of which begs a lot of questions for the elderly Aghajanians. If the British Government will not even discuss the Armenian Holocaust with the Turks on the grounds that the present Turkish government was not responsible, how come they let the Turks discriminate today against British citizens of Armenian ethnic origin? Is this discrimination not directly linked to the 1915 Holocast?

And do not visiting heads of state discuss with the Germans the Nazi Holocast against the Jews - and compensation for the survivors - without blaming the present German government for the atrocities?

"Our Holocast happened a long time ago," Astrid says. "It is easy to forget us. And Gaspar still writes his letters. But still the Turks can get away with refusing us compensation because of our ethnic origin - even though we are British."

**Shot in the arm for drug drive by Mexico**

Bill Cormier  
Associated Press

Mexico City - Mexican officials yesterday announced the capture of a drug lord responsible for tonnes of cocaine entering the United States, just before a US decision on whether to re-certify Mexico as an ally in the drug war.

The attorney-general's announcement came as Congressmen urged President Bill Clinton to deprive Mexico of its official status as a fully co-operative ally attempts to curb drug smuggling. Such status means Mexico can receive US financial aid to fight trafficking. The State Department was expected late yesterday to announce Mr Clinton's decisions on whether to certify the drug programmes of Mexico and 31 other countries.

Under arrest yesterday was Oscar Malherbe de Leon, head of the Gulf cartel, once ranked Mexico's second most powerful. A statement said prosecutors were preparing charges, including drug trafficking and possession. It did not say when he was captured. The arrest was another blow for the cartel, which grew from a backwoods marijuana operation into a booming operation under its now jailed kingpin, Juan Garcia Abrego. The statement said Mr Malherbe assumed the leadership after the arrest last year of Garcia Abrego, convicted in autumn by a US court of smuggling 15 tonnes of cocaine into the US. He was given 11 life sentences and fined \$128m.

Mr Malherbe's arrest is the latest in a flurry of last-minute disclosures before today's Clinton deadline to submit his drug certification recommendations to Congress. With US sentiment growing to deny Mexico status as an anti-drug ally, Mexico's navy burned a tonne of cocaine on Thursday in a public display of its resolve to crack down on trafficking.

## North Korea reels after minister dies

Andrew Marshall

North Korea has lost another member of its old guard, adding to the picture of a crumbling regime. The country's state media reported yesterday that Kim Kwang-jin, 69, the country's vice defence minister, died of an "incurable disease" on Thursday.

His demise came only days after Cho Kwang, the defence minister, also apparently succumbed to illness, suffering a heart attack.

The military has a key role in the country, and in particular in underpinning the authority of Kim Jong-il, son of "Great Leader" Kim Il-sung, who died in 1994.

But these are evidently not happy times for senior figures in North Korea. Given the lack of any reliable information from Pyongyang, it is hard to tell whether the cause is the winter, the worsening of the food situation, or something more sin-

a distinctly unhealthy place. All of these departures will accelerate change; they may be the product of Kim Jong-il's desire to force the pace as he tightens his grip on power. He has not yet formally inherited the vacant titles of state president and general secretary of the Workers Party.

Michael Breen, a Seoul-based consultant on North Korea, said that Kim, having used the old guard to secure his grip on power, has now found them blocking his tentative moves to take the country out of hostile isolation and establish dialogue with the United States. "One explanation of why things are moving so slowly in North Korea is because of problems regarding the old generation," he told Reuters news agency.

In South Korea, too, these are troubling times for the ruling party. President Kim Young-sam is attempting to restore his political image after a damaging financial scandal and a national confrontation over a planned new labour law.

Yesterday, he began by replacing his chief secretary and three other top advisers responsible for political, economic and general affairs. "This is the start of a major reshuffle in the government and the ruling party," a Presidential spokesman said. "The cabinet reshuffle is expected early next week."

The President promised on Tuesday to deal sternly with anybody - even close associates and family - who was involved with corruption, and began by banishing his son, Kim Hyun-chul. Yesterday a high-ranking government intelligence officer was also fired after he was accused of providing classified reports to the disgraced son.

The South Korean parliament is also considering a new version of the controversial law on trade unions, but it is unlikely to be finalised before the end of next week. Unhappy with the pace of legislation, the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions - which is outlawed and independent of the official trade unions - had called for a half-day strike yesterday, but the response was tepid.



Strike out: South Korean workers marching in Seoul yesterday over a new labour law

Photograph: Reuters

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## IMAGE OF THE WEEK

Calm once again on the Dee Estuary, Wirral, after the local waters had been stirred up by Thursday's by-election. A fisherman repaints his boat, already sporting a touch of fashionable New Labour red. Photograph by David Rose, taken with a Nikon FM2, 160ASA film, 300mm lens at 250th second at f8. To order a print of this picture - price £14 - phone 0171-293 2534.



# the long weekend

THE INDEPENDENT • SATURDAY 1 MARCH 1997

## WORDS OF THE WEEK



Pat Williams, left, professor of law at New York's Columbia University, was attacked for her views and verbosity when it was announced she was to be this year's Reith lecturer. Here is an extract from her first talk this week

...an privilege of never noticing oneself was the beginning of an imbalance from which so much, so much else flowed.

But that is hard to talk about, even now, this insight acquired before I had the words to sort it out.

Yet, it is imperative to think about this phenomenon of cloaking race - which I believe is a good deal more widespread than these small examples.

In a sense, race matters are resented and repressed in much the same way as matters of sex and scandal. The subject is considered a rude and transgressive one in mixed company - a matter whose observation is sometimes inevitable, but about which, once seen, little should be heard nonetheless.

Race thus tends to be treated as though it were in a specially delicate category of social infirmity, so called, like extreme obesity or disfigurement. Every parent knows a little of this dynamic, if in other contexts.

"Why doesn't that lady have any teeth?" comes the child's piping voice. "Why doesn't that gentleman have any hair?" and "Why is that little boy so black?"

"Sshhh," comes the anxious parental remonstrance, "the poor thing can't help it. We must all pretend that nothing's wrong."

And thus we are coached, upon pain of pun-

ishment, not to see a thing. Better be sure the parent faces an ethical dilemma in that moment of childish vision unrestrained by social nicety. On the one hand we rush to place a limit on what can be said to strangers and what must be withheld for fear of imposition, or of hurting someone's feelings.

As members of a broad society, we respect one another by learning not to inflict every last intimate prying curiosity we may harbour upon everyone we meet.

That said, there remains the problem of how or whether we ever answer the question, and that is the dimension of this dynamic that is considerably more troubling.

"Why is that man wearing no clothes, mummy?" pipes the childish voice once more. And the parent panics at the complication of trying to explain.

The naked man may be a nudist or a psychotic, or perhaps the emperor of the realm, but the silencing that is passed from parent to child is not only about the teaching of restraint, it is calculated to circumnavigate the question as though it had never been asked.

"Stop asking such silly questions."

A wall begins to grow around the forbidden gaze. For we all know - and children best of all - when someone wants to change the subject, and

for ever, and so the child is left to the monstrous creation of ignorance and wild imagination.

Again, I do believe that this unfortunate negotiation of social difference has much in common with discussions about race. Race is treated as though it were some sort of generic leprosy or a biological train-wreck. Those who privilege themselves as "unraced" - usually, but not always, those who are white - are always anxiously maintaining that it doesn't matter, even as they are quite busy feeling pity, no less, and thankful to God for their great good luck in having been spared so intolerable an affliction.

Meanwhile, those marked as "having race" are ground down by the pendular stresses of having to explain what it feels like to be you - why are you black? why are you black? why are you black? - over and over again. Or alternatively, placed in a kind of conversational quarantine of muteness in which any mention of racial circumstance reduces all sides to tears, tears, sobs and other paroxysms of unseemly anguish.

This sad habitual paralysis in the face of the foreign and the anxiety producing. It is as though we were all skating across a pond that is not quite thoroughly frozen. Two centuries ago, or perhaps only a few decades ago, the lake was solidly frozen. And if, for those skating across the surface, things seemed much more secure. It was a much more dismal lot for those whose fates were frozen at the bottom of the pond.

Over time, the weather of race relations has warmed somewhat and some few of those at the bottom have found their way to the surface. We no longer hold our breath and we have even learnt to skate. The noisy racial chasm still yawns darkly beneath us all but we few brave souls glide gingerly above upon a skim of hope. Our bodies made light with denial. The black pond so dangerously and thinly iced with conviction that talking about it will only make things worse.

*The Reith Lectures, 'The Genealogy of Race: Towards a Theory of Grace'. The next talk is 'The Pantomime of Race', on Radio 4, Tuesday, 8.30pm*

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Charming, upwardly mobile, but unfortunately a Nazi page 7

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NOBODY EVER GOES JUST ONCE

# Relaxing in another dimension

A new style of jigsaw may be a refuge from daily stress, says William Hartston

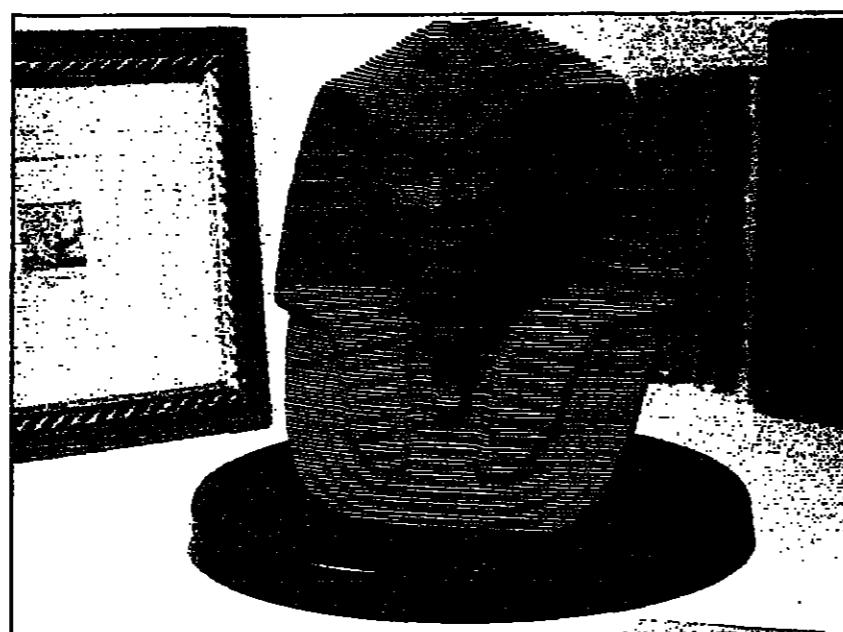
**J**ust suppose, for a moment, that you were looking for a pastime that provided a real antidote to the stresses of everyday life. First, it would have to be non-competitive – bridge, backgammon and chess are all very well as comparatively harmless outlets for our innate aggression, but they can hardly be described as therapeutic; and as for such ostensibly fun games as Cluedo or Monopoly, we all know how they can bring out the worst personality traits of the more determined practitioners.

So competitiveness is out, but we do need something that is both slow and absorbing in order to offer a complete break from real life and occupy our attention for long enough to wind down from everyday pressures. Finally, it has to be perceived as something worth doing, so must offer a satisfying goal to serve as a reward for the effort involved. And if that goal can be achieved by a number of people acting in co-operation, then all the better.

Dr Jenny Cozens, who is a clinical psychologist and Principal Research Fellow at Leeds University, has identified something that she believes may satisfy all the above criteria: jigsaws, preferably three-dimensional ones. Endorsing the new "Puzz 3D" range from Waddingtons, Dr Cozens says: "Completing puzzles can be beneficial to many people, but the sheer complexity of 'Puzz 3D' makes it mind-absorbing which can be an antidote to stress."

Hang on a moment, though. Don't jigsaws fuel frustration and lead to tetchy outbursts? "Has anyone seen a green piece with a red line through it I had it a moment ago oh for goodness sake who's been knocking pieces on to the floor no don't put your cup down there you clumsy oaf now you'll just have to put all that corner together again now where's that green piece gone again?"

As Dr Cozens adds: "The benefits of 'Puzz 3D' may also depend on personality type – for example, practical people are often good at puzzles, while those who are planners rather than doers will benefit from the concentration the puzzle requires." The delayed gratification offered by jigsaws, slowly and tangibly working towards the final achievement of finishing the puzzle, makes it particularly good for the "sensing" people among Jungian personality types. In contrast to modern computer games, which provide achievement overload through an orgy of zapping and powing, the sedate pace of jigsaws can teach children patience. And not only children. In an increasingly fast-moving society, when even the traditionally relaxing lunch hour has fallen victim to the ever more demanding pace of life, Dr Cozens believes that we may



'The Pharaoh', computer-scanned by Really Useful Games and cut into 140 slices



Some items from Waddingtons' 'Puzz 3D' range (left to right): the US Capitol, the Empire State Building, the Eiffel Tower, Big Ben, the Taj Mahal. The scale reflects relative sizes of the buildings, not the puzzles. The 4ft-tall, 1,483-piece Big Ben is the most challenging

all benefit from an activity that encourages patience and an appreciation of the joys of delayed reward. "We only have to go shopping to see how impatient we have all become," she says.

Whatever reservations we may have about computer games, however, the successful launch of two different ranges of three-dimensional jigsaws owes everything to recent technological improvements. The real puzzle, for Paul Gallant, the inventor of 'Puzz 3D', was to find a way to hold a three-dimensional jigsaw together without glue or pins. The solution came from the unlikely source of British Petroleum, which was certainly not thinking primarily of jigsaws when it produced just the right type of polyethylene foam to enable the puzzles to hold together at their dovetail joints.

"Sculpture Puzzles", the new range from Really Useful Games, owes its inspiration to computer scanning techniques. Three-dimensional objects, from works of art such as the Venus de Milo or Rodin's *The Kiss* to commonplace things such as a head or a clock, are scanned by a computer that can then produce a series of cross-sections that pile up to make the original object.

The jigsaws are intelligently designed to offer the puzzler a choice of levels of difficulty. If you just want to put it together, there are "cheat" numbers on every piece that

let you, after doing a simple sum, work out the order in which they should be placed on the central column. Although not mentioned by the manufacturers, this element can also be used as a sneaky way to encourage numeracy in children. Mixing sums with jigsaws seems a perfect way to get small children to practise their arithmetic. The serious jigsaw doer, of course, will ignore the numbers and just work by sight and feel to try to get them in the right order. Finally, for those who want a real challenge, several of the pieces may be broken into three, so that each level becomes a mini-jigsaw of its own. The final jigsaw-sculptures are quite stunning, making highly attractive ornaments in their own right.

The Dutch historian-philosopher Johan Huizinga, in his influential work *Homo Ludens*, wrote about the absolute sense of order offered by games through their clearly defined rules and delineation of playing areas: "Here we come across another, very positive feature of play: it creates order, *is* order. Into an imperfect world and into the confusion of life it brings a temporary, a limited perfection. Play demands order, absolute and supreme. The least deviation from it 'spoils the game', robs it of its character, and makes it worthless. The profound affinity between play and order is perhaps the reason why play ... seems to lie to such a large extent in the field of aesthetics. It may be that this aesthetic factor is identical with the impulse to create orderly form, which animates play in all its aspects."

These words, written in 1944, seem particularly appropriate to account for the joy of jigsaws – the most fundamental example of turning chaos into order in the context of a game, though oddly enough Huizinga does not seem to mention jigsaws at all in his book. What Waddington's "Puzz 3D" and the "Sculpture Puzzles" from Really Useful Games have to offer, however, is completed puzzles that are considerably more attractive (and far easier to display) than the old-fashioned flat jigsaws.

In explaining the joy of finally completing a truly complicated jigsaw, compared with the instant gratification of other types of game, Jenny Cozens talks of "the difference between a detective story and Proust". The aesthetic pleasure to be derived from the new ranges can only be *La Recherche du Puzzle Perdu*.

The 'Puzz 3D' range from Waddingtons includes puzzles from 225 to almost 1,500 pieces, taking from 3 to 40 hours to complete. Prices range from £14.99 to £40. 'Sculpture Puzzles' from Really Useful Games Completion time depends on your cheating capacity. Prices around £14-£30.

## Games people play

Pandora Melly finds fantasy in a mine-field

Nicholas Hills, 53, architect

I used to have my ears rubbed off in rugby scrums. I haven't played for 50 years, but my little son plays a bit. He's very good at running, preferably away from things. He's just won the 100 metres at his school sports day. It was quite thrilling to see the rivalry between him and his friend Cedric. There was torture and strain, and a breakdown by Cedric who went away and sulked, but I suppose that's all right at 11.

I am nearly 60, so I may be forgiven for not doing anything. It's not just age; I'm actually quite slow at things, which is why I'm working this evening instead of gallivanting off to the delights of Cromer or Norwich.

Cromer is famous for its lifeboat and shanty men. The lifeboat is always rescuing people; it's probably out in this weather, we're having tremendous gales.

When I was little I was somewhat isolated; it was the war, you see. I had two imaginary friends, Mrs Schlinks and Mrs

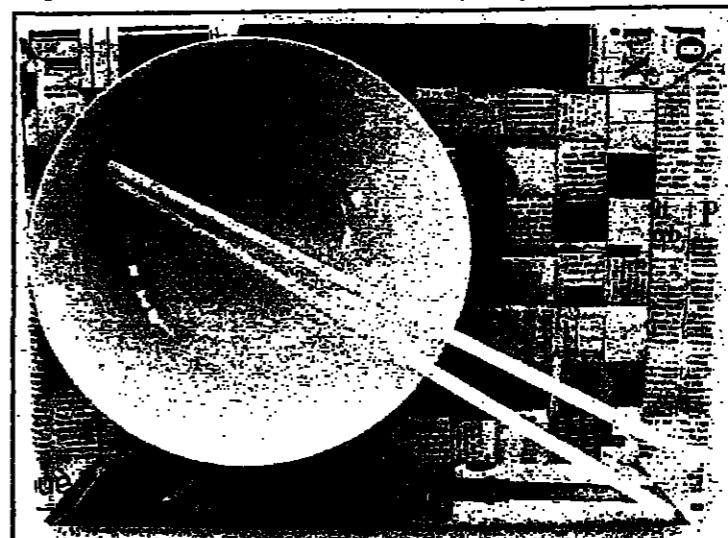
Schlinks, and they lived in a martello tower. I'm sure you wouldn't want to know about them. Well, they were ladies, weren't they? I can hardly remember anything about them. How old would I have been then? Five perhaps, or six. Does anyone have imaginary people today?

They weren't very interesting, except that their tower was a real one on the other side of a mine-field. I remember when my mother went completely frantic one day because a small friend and I had walked some distance through this mine-field to go swimming. No one believes this, but when young, my mother and a wild friend of hers jumped from the top of the tower out to the shingle below. Why they weren't killed I don't know, but they really did jump.

Annual membership of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution: 'Storm Force' for children, £5; 'Offshore' for sea-going members, £40, including quarterly journal. Details from RNLI (01202 663000).

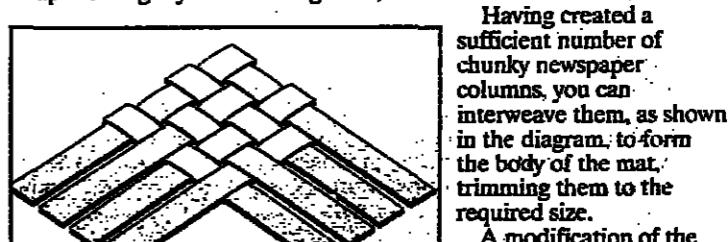
## Don't junk it ... use it

A practical use for newspaper columns



I have found countless uses for the newspaper mat, which is today's example of creative recycling. All you need is an old newspaper, scissors and a stapler, though I have found that a metre-long metal ruler also helps to produce a more finished product.

You start by folding the sheets of newspaper into thick strips. Just roll them up from one end and then squash flat, if you're feeling lazy, or wrap them tightly round a long ruler, then remove the ruler.



Having created a sufficient number of chunky newspaper columns, you can interweave them, as shown in the diagram, to form the body of the mat, trimming them to the required size.

A modification of the basic rolling technique is needed for the elegant borders. For these, you take your sheet of newspaper and roll it up from opposite edges until they meet in the middle. This is then folded over the edges of the woven section and stapled into place, both covering the loose edges and fixing the geometry of the entire object. Use broadsheet pages for a mat to protect your floor from the waste bin. Tabloid pages for spill-absorbent table mats, and last week's *The Eye* for individual place-mats.

Bawn O'Beirne-Ranaghan

The games page is edited by William Hartston

### Chess William Hartston

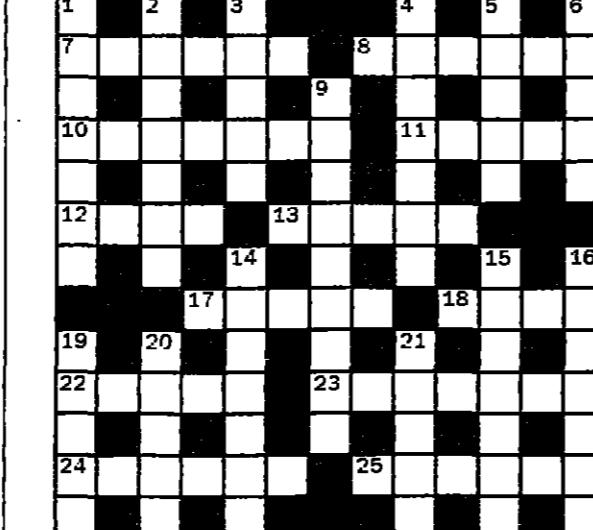
If you find yourself at a loose end in north London this weekend, you should drop in at the London College of Traditional Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (Hsi House, 447 High Road, Finchley N12) where three London grandmasters, Chris Ward, Keith Arkell and Neil McDonald, face three Chinese grandmasters. Wang Zili, Ye Jiangchuan and Peng Zhaojun, in a challenge match between London and Peking.

Until the Sixties, China did not participate in international chess. With their own Chinese Chess, as well as Go and other oriental board games, they showed little interest in the Western game. Chinese teams played in the Olympiads of the late Sixties, but were seen more as a curiosity than a threat to the leading chess nations. Indeed it was not until 1974 that a Chinese player won a game against a grandmaster. I well remember the loser of that game, the urban Dutch Grandmaster Jan Hein Donner, proudly maintaining: "Now I am the third most famous player in the world." Since his defeat would ensure that his name would be known throughout China, he reckoned that only Fischer and Spassky would be more famous.

In the Eighties, the Chinese became a real world chess power – but

### concise crossword

No.3235 Saturday 1 March



#### ACROSS

- 7 Make secure (6)
- 8 Rowing crews (6)
- 10 Drain completely (7)
- 11 Building block (5)
- 12 Society (4)
- 13 Severe (5)
- 17 Causing irritation (5)
- 18 SE Asian language (4)
- 22 Large serving spoon (5)
- 23 Book collection (7)
- 24 Suitable for consumption (6)
- 25 Breakfast food (6)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:  
ACROSS: 1 Cootie, 4 Butcher (Kookaburra), 5 Sirenaus, 6 Rite, 10 Low, 12 Brine, 13 Granula, 14 Turkev, 15 Hornet, 16 Dows, 1 Corral, 18 Rhee, 19 Bhutan, 20 Roul, 21 Waller, 22 Strand, 23 Seag opera, 24 Blue, 25 Select, 16 Infamy, 17 Scotch, 18 Digest, 21 Bank.

### Bridge Alan Hiron

Game all; dealer South

North	♦J 4
	♦8 5 2
	0 A K 8 6 3 2
	♦7 3
West	
	♦K 3
	♦6 5
	♦V Q J 10 7
	♦9 4 3
	♦10 7 4
	♦J 9 5
	♦A J 5
South	♦K 10 9 6 2
	♦A 10 9 8 7 2
	♦A 6
	♦Q 8 4

South congratulated East on his smart defence against Four Spades on this deal. Dummy agreed with that, but refrained from sympathising with his partner. See if you can spot why.

South opened 1 ♠ and West overcalled with 2 ♡. Not a shy bidder, North showed his diamonds at the Three level and South jumped to 4 ♣ against which West led 2 ♦. Dummy overtook his ♦ Q on the table, and discarded his losing heart on the other top diamond. There was little point in taking

the trump finesse at this stage,

for if the defendant did not want South to trump a losing club in dummy, they would have to lead trumps themselves. So South led a club from the table. This was East's chance to shine. He went in with his unprotected king, and when held, switched to a trump. The finesse lost, West played another trump, and now there was no way for South to avoid losing two more clubs to go one off.

South's play would have worked if West had held both top club honours, even with the trump king wrong, but he missed a distinct improvement. After discarding his losing heart at trick three, he does better to ruff a diamond high and then lead clubs from hand. Now, if East wins and switches to a trump, declarer finesse. The difference is that dummy's remaining diamonds are established and, indeed, West leads a second trump, both of South's remaining losing clubs go away on the diamonds. And, if the diamonds had not broken 3-3, there would still have been the trump finesse in reserve.

Perplexity

"How many pigs do you keep on the farm?" I asked professor Sweeneave. "You'll need brains to answer that," he replied. "All I can remember is that the number of pigs is divisible by three; it's a five-digit number and the digits are represented by the letters SWINE where BRAINS plus BRAINS equals ANSWER."

So many pigs did the professor keep on his farm? The first correct answer opened on 12

March will win a copy of the new Chambers 21st Century Dictionary. Answers to: Perplexity, *The Independent*, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

15 February answers:  
Nectarines (juice creates),  
Tangerines (green satin),  
Grapefruits (furriest gap).

Winner: Mrs M Boyle (Consett)

### Backgammon Chris Bray

Unlike London, where the Double Fives club is the centre of the backgammon action, New York has four clubs open seven days a week. Some of the world's top players can be seen in action and at least one of the chouettes I saw there recently was played at \$500 a point. Players were required to have \$40,000 in cash to join in – certainly not for the faint-hearted.

Alan Steffen, who will be familiar to many for his victory in the 1984 British Championships, has just opened his new club, the Ace Point. Professionally and hospitably run by Alan and his wife Lourdes, it provides games for all levels of players. The next few positions will be taken from some of my games there. To start, what could be simpler than a bear-off? White is on roll in the position above. Should he redouble to 4? If he redoubles should Black take? On the pip count, White leads by 21 to 29. Based on this alone, White should double and Black should drop. However, there are other factors to consider. White has eight men to bear-off. Black has only six. White has an even number of men and a gap on his 4-point so if he rolls a number like 4,2 it will cost him a full roll (it will take him an extra roll to bear off his men). And if White, for example, rolls a 5, he will bear a man off the 5-point, thus "wasting" a pip. Black may reach a position where he can redouble. Most of these factors benefit Black, but is it enough to take the double? Should White wait a roll because he may roll a 4? This simple problem has suddenly become complex. There is a way to solve it and others like it, as we shall see next week. In the meantime decide whether you would double as White and take or drop as Black.

The Ace Point Club can be found at 41 East 60th Street (5th floor), New York 10022 (001-212-753-0842). Internet: [adslm@prodigy.net](mailto:adslm@prodigy.net)

TURN TO PAGE 31... for the weather, sky at night, Jasper Rees on TV, Robert Hanks on radio and Damien Hirst's cartoon sage of artistic angst

الآن من الأصل



Lesley Garrett: 'I want to get rid of all the stereotypes and put people straight about what opera is... modern, interesting, believable, contemporary'

PHOTOGRAPH: GLYNNE GRIFFITHS

If the list of *Things To Avoid Doing In Life* is headed by "Playing Poker with Men Called 'Doc'" and "Walking into a Soweto Bar and Shouting 'Boy!', you'll find 'Attempting to Patronise Lesley Garrett' pretty high in the batting order. Ms Garrett is a compact (5ft 4ins) lady from Doncaster with enormous grey-green eyes, an eagerly matey manner and a conversational style that's a cross between Edwina Currie and Bert Lynch, switching from banting to farrago. She is the best-selling female opera singer in the country, the principal soprano at the English National Opera and the most ubiquitous trained voice in the country. She also has a reputation for enthusiastic self-promotion. Not even Nigel Kennedy in his most Stradivarius-chewing, 'allo-monsta! persona can hold a candle to Ms Garrett when it comes to self-publicity, whether it's being 'Gotted' by Noel Edmonds, turning up on Esther Rantzen's sink of lachrymosity, *Hearts of Gold*, or appearing in a variety of plunging frocks on her album sleeves. Even if your interest in the classical repertoire began and ended with "Nessun Dorma", it's likely you've come across Ms Garrett's divine larynx without realising it; she has sung on a dozen TV ads, her voice fluting behind the earthbound attractions of Ragà pasta sauce, Kenko coffee and the Renault 19 car.

A busy life, a life in the spotlights, the footlights, the best-seller charts. But Ms Garrett's celebrity has not, she says, been a smooth trajectory of acclaim. She's got where she is only by enduring the condescension of successive waves of horrible people: male chauvinists, Londoners, classical purists, opera directors, foreign directors, reviewers, prudes, the press... Nothing, in her headlong flow of conversation, was more heartfelt than the moments at which the word "patronise" surfaced. They reached a climax when she was talking about *Orpheus and Eurydice*, which

opens at the ENO on Monday with Ms Garrett playing Gluck's doomed, Hades-stranded heroine. The opera's choreographed and directed by Marthi Clarke, whom I love working with. Her currency is profoundly visual, she deals in texture, shape and colour, the way these things generate mood and emotion and therefore drama, but she leaves it to me to make the story, the drama, work. She doesn't feel she has to teach me, which is wonderful, it's so... *not patronising*.

Have you spent your life (I asked) being talked down to? "Aghhhh!" Ms Garrett, who had been sitting cross-legged on a Kellogg's footstool for the last hour, abruptly banged both fists on the material, releasing a cloud of Isafan motes, and uttering a heart-breaking cry. "For being too Northern, too girlish, too tomboyish. For being too little, for being too sexy..."

One reason why some people refuse to take La Garrett seriously is her long-sustained crusade to bring opera to the people. Ever since 1989, when the ENO launched their meet-the-company corporate campaign with a huge photograph of Ms Garrett looking wanton in a long black dress, she has gone out of her way to demystify opera to be Everyman's guide through the murky jungle of aria, recitative, coloratura and 20-minute death scene.

"I want to get rid of all the stereotypes," she says, "and put people straight about what opera is. You know the vast majority of people in this country still regard opera as elitist, highbrow, difficult to understand, full of enormous people screaming at each other in a foreign language: they think they'll have to watch stories they can't

relate to, being sung at prices they can't afford. I want to say, no, it's not like that, it's modern, it's interesting, it's believable, it's contemporary, and it's probably the biggest turn-on your imagination will ever have."

Pew. But why did she care whether people listened to music? Why did it matter if the majority of people in the UK never heard a single note by Gluck? "If they don't ever hear Gluck because of a misguided impression about the music, if they don't hear it because of a stereotype that they believe without ever questioning, if they don't ever hear Gluck because they imagine it will make them feel stupid - those are all things I abhor. Because it does matter. The wider everyone's artistic experience is, the better it makes you. It's part of the spiritual health of this country, and of our general well-being, to have as much exposure to as much art as possible."

Cynics might point to the 70,000 sales of Ms Garrett's album, *Soprano in Red*, and say that the more new listeners classical opera acquires, the more CDs the divine Ms G will sell. She deftly anticipates such criticism by turning the whole business of popularism and promotion into a style statement. "It was with the ENO picture that I discovered how exciting it is to create publicity, and it's all part of the package; it's what I do. I find it fascinating to see what captures the public imagination. If you want classical music to have a future, you have to join the club and promote it, to compete with the audio-visual competition."

She readily admits the power of the image, even in the realm of music. "It was that picture of the operetta king's high-kicking me in the ENO campaign that

started my record career. I got a recording contract because of that picture, and I thought, 'Hey, this is powerful shit!' The voice came into it second. Of course it rapidly became the most important thing - I wouldn't have done it otherwise."

You could watch her bringing opera to the people via Harry Enfield's *Guide to Opera* a few years ago, and a documentary with the *Birds of a Feather* girls Pauline Quirke and Linda Robson. You might have caught a TV "special" devoted to her work entitled *Viva La Diva* in April 1995. Nobody could have tried harder to change the image of the prima donna from that of a neurotic and demanding termagant to a matey and all

spoof. Did she approach it differently? "I approach all the roles in exactly the same way," she says with a trace of asperity. "I ask: what is this character about? What's been happening to her now, and what's she going to do next? It doesn't matter if it's comedy or tragedy, it's always people undergoing a profound emotional change. I approach them all very seriously. It's just that some of them have laughs, and some don't..."

Laffs, eh? Did she ever worry that the lighter side of her nature got in the way of her interpretations? She did her brilliant, aren't-i-incredible smile. "Yes it does come out all

unheard-of for a man to be in charge of tiny babies."

The family were, of course, egregiously musical, somewhere between the Partridge Family and the Von Trapps. "My father's a big opera fan - but there was a great variety of music around. Music wasn't a hobby of the family but of the whole area of south Yorkshire." What did her father sing? "He loved Mario Lanza's stuff. And 'Danny Boy'. And the 'Miserere' from Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, that was a huge favourite, we sang that together a lot. It was wonderful to be so uncluttered by television. We just had the radio and the piano. Mother sang and played the piano. And we didn't worry about compartments of music. I'd sing 'My Old Man Said Follow the Van', followed by Handel's *Messiah*, and not think anything about it. Then my father would write me a poem, and my mother would play some Bach on the piano. And my uncle would come round and play jazz on the saxophone. And I'd go to school and we'd do Benjamin Britten's *The Little Sweep*, and the next term we'd do *My Fair Lady*. It was completely normal to juggle them all together."

When she was 15, her Aunt Eileen took her to London for the first time and introduced her to showbiz operatic and otherwise. "Then, after my sisters were born, he realised he most wanted to work with children, and decided to be a headmaster. So he did correspondence course in his signboard, and went around with a tape-recorder on his bike, and became head teacher at an infants school, 'although he encountered a lot of sexual discrimination. It was pretty

ing the play, I wondered if this had been the inspiration behind Ms Garrett's brief but notorious flash of naked bottom during a production of *Die Fledermaus*. "Something that amazed me when I whipped my kit off was that the reaction was exactly the same as with Diana Rigg 20 years before - that is, ridiculous over the top. As if the papers had learnt nothing in that time."

The most interesting hiccup in Ms Garrett's rise came in 1982, when her first marriage failed and her voice packed up completely. She couldn't sing, couldn't hold a tune, could hardly produce a note - "maybe a tone, that was all. I just couldn't do it. I got a few jobs and bummed around, but I was really frightened. I thought I'd blown it and lost it for good. There was apparently nothing wrong but I just couldn't remember how to sing." She went to her singing teacher to rebuild her whole range of notes (it took, she says, years) but also saw a shrink. "The idea was that I was probably riddled with guilt - that I'd left my husband to pursue my career - and had taken my voice away to punish myself. It all sounded a bit California, but it was interesting and I discovered a lot about my own resilience..."

As she bustles about her large and airy house in the fashionable end of Highgate, where she lives with her second husband Peter and their children Chloe and Jeremy, it's hard to imagine this strong, unsinkably optimistic woman being bothered by guilt. You get the impression she has learnt to handle psychological stresses with the same aplomb that she handles critics, opera house bosses and Viennese snobs. Lesley Garrett has become such a force of nature, in her music-for-all crusading, her spot-the-diva self-promotion, her popular albums of crossover songs, that you leave her with the impression of a woman endlessly forging ahead. As if stopping to think, or to look back, might leave her, like Eurydice, becalmed in regions quite alien to her jolly spirit.

## John Walsh meets... Lesley Garrett



hoydenish sexpot-next-door. But the downside of all this in your-lap democratising was a suspicion in the mind of some commentators that Ms Garrett was a little too un-purist to be an authentic classical singer. I remarked that she'd played Eurydice at the ENO before, in Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*, and that Gluck was a radically more stark and serious proposition than the operetta king's high-kicking

the time, whether I like it or not. It's just kind of there. There's no character in history that hasn't got a lighter side, that hasn't some humour somewhere; but whether they're allowed to demonstrate it within the confines of the role is another matter." The wintry figures of Job, Metternich, Gladstone, Dostoyevsky and the Revd Ian Paisley briefly wandered through my head, looking for their "lighter side" - but then they'd

onist who was volatile and not always faithful to his wife, in a spirit of true southern friendship. Thornton consulted his chum in the White House to get his blessing before taking on the movie adaptation of the book. Their discussion remains private. But Thornton loyalty admits to having "toned down the book a bit".

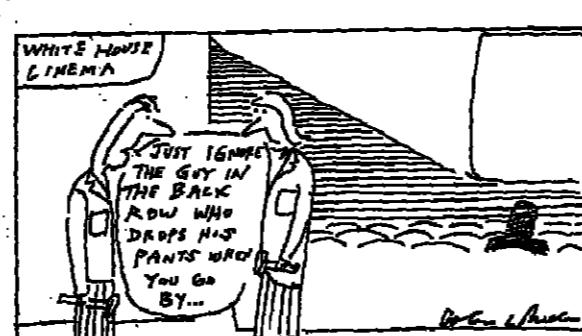
"So how did you get into acting?" just occasionally produces a memorable response. It did at a recent awards lunch when I was seated next to Ricky Tomlinson, the bearded Liverpudlian who gave a searing performance in Jimmy McGovern's TV dramatisation of the Hillsborough disaster, and who is shortly to star in the film *Mojo* alongside Harold Pinter in a rare screen role. Tomlinson told me

that he was one of the Shrewsbury Three (an all-but-forgotten episode during the Heath government in which three building workers were jailed for illegal picketing in 1972). He was the shop steward and served two years in prison. When he came out he was blacklisted by the building trade and made his living doing stand-up comedy, something he had fantasised about in jail.

He still does regular stand-up to the accompaniment of his banjo and assorted hecklers, in Liverpool's Atlantic pub. He didn't have his first acting role until he was 40, and walk-on parts led eventually to roles in *Brookside*, *Cracker* and *Hillsborough*. Actor, wisecracker, banjo player and one-time political prisoner... why the chat show circuit hasn't discovered this guy is a mystery.

Lisa Anderson, the music industry consultant and eminence grise behind this week's Brit Awards, at least found that organising the bash this week did not cause her to throw up with nerves, as she has done on two occasions in her career. One was when she was appointed MD of RCA Records, the first woman to rise so high in the industry.

The other was when Richard Branson told her to go to court to give a character reference for Johnny Rotten. Mr Rotten was up for assault. She looked at the two six-footers he was supposed to have hit, looked at five-foot-six Rotten and told the magistrate: "He couldn't possibly have done it. He's so fabulously, gloriously weedy." Rotten got off. Lisa was promoted and punk died.

David Lister  
arts notebook

*Sling Blade* is the story of a retarded Arkansas man released from an asylum for the criminally insane, to return against his will to society. Billy Bob Thornton, it should be explained, is the film's writer, director and star and was a surprise nomination for Best Actor in the Oscars. Before becoming an

actor, he did actually work on a Clinton highway crew in Arkansas, clearing brush, with a sling blade.

Thornton, who still lives in Arkansas, remains friends with the President. His latest directorial venture is filming *Primary Colors*, the thinly disguised novel about Clinton's early days with a protagonist.

# arts & books

## Ins and outs of Scottish Highland dancing

Why isn't *La Sylphide* performed more often? Created in 1832 by Filippo Taglioni to showcase his daughter Marie's revolutionary pointe-work, the ballet was reworked in 1836 by the Danish romantic Auguste Bournonville and it is this version that usually survives today. Or does it? You can see it regularly in Paris or New York or Copenhagen, but this jewel of the romantic repertoire hasn't adored the London stage since ENB last did it in 1989. Scottish Ballet are currently touring with a production that reminds us why this neglect is such a scandal.

The lean, two-act tale tells of James, a young Scottish bridgegroom, beguiled by a passing Sylph on the eve of his wedding. A local hag brews an enchanted scarf which James believes will bind the elusive Sylph to him – big mistake. Scottish Ballet has performed the work since 1973 and the current restaging is by the former Royal Danish ballerina Sorella Englund. On Wednesday, Johan Kobborg, a young Danish virtuoso, acted the role of James with eagerness and melancholy and danced it with a brilliance that few British dancers could match. His

**BALLET** *La Sylphide*. Woking: *Highland Fling*, *The Place*, London

partner was fellow guest Tamara Rojo, who imbued the Sylph with a mixture of mischief and other-worldly innocence. The role of the vengeful crone Madge often degenerates into ham, but Sorella Englund conveyed the spite and menace of the character with an air of normality. Although eccentric, she would not be out of place at a Highland wedding – like a giddy auntie who always gets legless but has to be invited. The corps formed Bournonville's sculptural ensembles – as deft and artful as a clutch of cherubs on a ceiling.

These treats seemed a tiny bit wasted on Woking. Wednesday's audience was thin and Kobborg's performance, which would have blown the socks off Covent Garden, was greeted with village-cricket applause. The boneheadedness of this response was highlighted by the knicker-wetting screams greeting the evening's other piece, Robert North's butch ballet *Troy Game*.

Matthew Bourne's 1994 version of *La Sylphide* might have gone down better. *Highland Fling* relocates the ballet to an

absurdly plaid pad in a Glasgow high-rise, and the Sylph is a grungy wif who symbolises the anarchic pleasures of James' chemical dependence. Her hands may be demurely crossed but they are pawing at her crotch.

The second act has won better than the first. Bourne's five grubby sylphs show distinct flashes of what he would later achieve with his corps of male swans, and we glimpse the choreographer's ability to flip from farce to tragedy. Bournonville's Sylph dies as the baleful scarf enfolds her and the fairy wings drop from her waist. It's a terrible moment, but its full impact requires an audience in tune with the romantic sensibilities and able to appreciate the tragic loss of immortality. Bourne's Sylph dies when James, eager for gratification, bloodily amputates her wings, a *coup de théâtre* that takes a short cut to our emotions.

*'Highland Fling'*, tonight, *The Place*, London WC1 (387 0031); then Wed-Sat, Midlands Art Centre, Birmingham (0121 440 3838). Scottish Ballet double-bill, 29 Apr-3 May, *The Swan*, High Wycombe (0199 512000); 20-24 May, *The Lyceum*, Sheffield (0114 276 9922).

## Voices raised in protest – but ever so politely

**CLASSICAL Passages**  
*Queen Elizabeth Hall, London*

Good idea in principle: naff in practice. For Wednesday's concert at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, the Women's Playhouse Trust had brought together a collection of women writers, composers, visual artists, a director and sundry performers to create a contemporary response to the obscenity of war, racism, dispossess and displacement.

*Passages*, comprising 20 newly commissioned songs, was the result, performed end-to-end in two parts. But why should the effect have been so muted? Was it the dominating presence of an enormous, white, bed-like structure – slightly Ikea-style, but also reminiscent of Claes Oldenburg's soft sculptures – on which the five women singers swayed and tottered? Surely not the surface for angry protestation or passionate discourse. And the "politeness" of the QEH seemed so desperately at odds with the subject matter – isn't *Passages* a show for angry, empty warehouses where tickets are cheap and the communication simple? Two-foot-square programmes (at £4 a shot) do nothing but aggravate adjacent punters, and text that requires a magnifying glass is not best served by low lights. In the Stygian gloom, poets'

waltz, picked out on synthesiser, as four women sang to each other atop the bales of the bed, like some perverse haystack.

"This Little Piggy" by Jane Gardner, again to a text by Katie Campbell, attempted to harness the terror and dislocated pair of confrontation with faceless bureaucracy; Jenny Miller was a touching proponent. "The Old Nag Explains Herself" (text by Jo Shapcott, music by Ruth Brychmore) seemed heartfelt, but what was being sung? "Shit in Her Eyes", by the most gifted of the crowd, Errrollyn Wallen, to a text by Deborah Levy, began the second half, raunchily sporting Angie Brown in high-energy rock mode. But fit in red? A little clichéd, perhaps. And what standard props: battered suitcases, battered shoes, black trenchcoats, white head-scarves. Here was tabloid politics, bereft of satire, lacking in bite, a cry too far from the bitter worlds of Weill, Eisler or Shostakovich.

Wasti Kani conducted; Jules Wright directed; other (table) singers were Ann-Marie Sands, Lynne Davies, Tinuke Olafimihan, Angie Brown and Hyacinth Nicholls.

**S**hakespeare's *Cymbeline* and Tennessee Williams' *Camino Real* are not the sort of plays that cause stampedes to the box-office, so, with the opening of both this week in Stratford, the RSC can't be accused of playing safe with repertoire. Towards the end of the Williams, one of the characters is moved to allude to the famous TS Eliot line that "Humankind cannot bear very much reality". After seeing these two works on consecutive evenings, you feel that it is humankind's capacity to tolerate unreality that has been diligently tested.

A virtuous exercise in tonal incongruities and discrepant emotional extremes, *Cymbeline* juxtaposes the wildly improbable and the piercingly heartfelt, the beautiful and the grotesque. This is pushed to the limit in the scene where the heroine Imogen, believed dead, is laid next to a decapitated corpse. When she comes round, the clothes trick her into thinking that this grisly object is her husband. The audience knows that it is, in fact, her nasty, ridiculous step-brother, Cloten, so her speech of stricken recognition is delivered in a context pregnant with black, bad-taste comedy.

The greatest asset in Adrian Noble's main-stage production at Stratford is Joanne Pearce, who, in the role of Imogen, has the flexibility to present her at some moments with a kind of warm, playful detachment and, at others, with a stunning emotional raptus.

In this heavily cut version of the play, pre-Christian Britain and the Rome with which it is in conflict over tributes have been given a strongly oriental look – Two Little Maids from School meet the Seven Samurais in a bare blue box within which a huge sail-like white sheet is raised and lowered to define the various locations. Characters trip on and off via a ramp that extends down one of the aisles. Notwithstanding all this distancing exoticism, *Cymbeline*'s lost sons – played by a droll, artful artlessness by Richard Cant and Jo Stone-Fewings – speak with the broad Welsh accents of the wids where they've been reared.

Noble makes the complicated proceedings unusually clear – the mind-knotting expository dialogue between the first and second gentlemen at the start has been reduced to a scene-setting narrative told by the soothsayer to a nomadic tribe sitting round a flaming dish. This puts the production on the right fable-like lines. Shades of the Victorian pantomime villain are perhaps evoked too strongly in Paul Freeman's smooth dastard of a Jachimo, but Guy Henry interestingly turns Cloten into an effete class-conscious dimwit who – in a way that is almost pathetic – knows deep-down that he is a born loser.

Tennessee Williams once revealed that he got the germ of *Camino Real* from the sudden fear he briefly experienced, he watched a torch-carrying procession with black, bad-taste comedy.

Mexico, of Dying in an Unknown Place. In *Camino Real*, that place has become thoroughly mythical: a desolated, out-of-time, central American coastal town, with a desert beyond its ancient walls. Stranded here are a group of romantic non-conformists from history and literature, who are all presented as well past their sell-by dates (they include Casanova, Marguerite Gautier, Don Quixote and Lord Byron). They are joined by another has-been, Kilroy, an American vagrant who was once a champion boxer but who has had to ditch his career because his heart is "as big as the head of a baby".

Darrell D'Silva brings Kilroy engagingly to life in Steven Pimlott's atmospheric, bustling, and endless-seeming production. But, as a play about the fate of the romantic in modern society, the piece can only offer an inert allegorical conflict between characters who have an unearned poignancy by virtue of their contrived temporal position and caricature baddies.

Moving performances from Susannah York as Marguerite and Peter Egan as Casanova did not prevent the experience of watching this long and heavy-handed play from feeling like a chore. It's the kind of work you can enjoy the virtue of having seen. Once.

*'Cymbeline'* is at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre; *'Camino Real'* at the Swan. Both in rep. Booking 01789 295623

## The reality myth

Paul Taylor catches a rare sight of 'Cymbeline' and 'Camino Real' at Stratford



Casanova meets the Lady of the Camellias: Peter Egan and Susannah York in 'Camino Real'

PHOTOGRAPH: IAN KYNG

### NEXT WEEK IN

## THE INDEPENDENT

**MONDAY DEEPAK CHOPRA**  
the richest guru in the West. Has Hillary Clinton and Michael Jackson in his thrall but not our new interviewer Deborah Ross



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ON THE ARTS PAGES THIS WEEK  
Interviews with Rostropovich, Anthony Minghella and Luther Vandross

THE INDEPENDENT  
IT IS...ARE YOU?



David Benedict, *WEEK IN REVIEW*



THE PLAY King Lear



THE EXHIBITION Lovis Corinth

### overview

### critical view

### our view

Jane The Piano Campion directs Nicole Kidman, John Malkovich, Barbara Hershey and Martin Donovan in a big-budget, glossy adaptation of Henry James's 1881 novel of Americans abroad in which the innocent Isabel Archer rejects suitors only to marry a fortune-hunter. Cert 12, 144 mins, at the Lumière, London WC2 and across the country

Ex-Theatre Clwyd director Helen Kaut-Howson goes to Leicester (where Lear is buried) for Shakespeare's cross between a state-of-the-nation play and a domestic tragedy with Théâtre de Complicité's Marcello Magni and Kathryn Hunter as the king. At the Leicester Haymarket, London WC2 (0116-253 9979) to 15 March

Canvases, etchings and drawings in a long overdue retrospective of Lovis Corinth (1858-1925), who fell in and out of favour with the German authorities, was a pioneer of German Impressionism and whose work also straddles Symbolism, Realism and Expressionism. At the Tate Gallery, London SW1 (0171-887 8008) until 5 May

Adam Mars-Jones declared it not "the shining success that might have been hoped for ... a gifted director has lost her grip on a mightily elusive novel." "Frustrating. Punctuated with greatness ... it meanders through its narrative corridor like a blind man – oblivious to the human dramas going on around it," ummed the Standard. "She takes a poor departed author and tries to shake his work into a polemic life it never had and a psychological hindsight it would never have sought," admonished the FT. "As cinematically intelligent as it is faithful to the original ... immensely assured," yelped Time Out.

Paul Taylor, a Kathryn Hunter fan, was grievously disappointed by the production, set in a bleak, modern nursing home with Hunter offering, "as mannered and distancing an impersonation of male old age as Clive Dunn's used to be in Dad's Army". "Though Lear is a big enough play to withstand Kaut-Howson's frame, it's often a close-run thing," seethed the Telegraph. "Hunter's performance is strong enough not to demand any framing apology ... but she is imprisoned by the concept," chastised The Guardian. "Play and production fail to gel ... the play needs depth, not show," snorted The Times.

Tom Lubbock was enraptured by the late works: "When you come to these, you see the point of Corinth. The preceding work becomes interesting mainly because it's by the man who did these." "If not a great master in absolute terms, certainly a ... maverick whom even the British should admire," opined the Standard. "Will ensure that his stubbornly individual achievement is honoured in Britain at last," admired The Times. "Irritating waywardness ... some flashes of real painterly invention, and an awful lot of unconvinced painterly bluster," complained The Sunday Times. "So many thumping grandiosities," spluttered The Observer.

Very beautiful but the poster looks like Kidman has a headache, which says a lot.

Hunter succeeds towards the end of the play but the production never takes wing.

It's worth going round backwards to recognise the strength of the later, greater works.





# Human folly and the fictions of war

DJ Taylor on plain men in dark times

*The Pardon of Saint Anne* by William Palmer, Cape, £9.99  
*The World at Night* by Alan Furst, HarperCollins, £16.99

**N**ovels about the emotional consequences of warfare tend to take place off the battlefield. Even *Vanity Fair*, much of whose impetus derives from the battle of Waterloo, offers only a single military snapshot — George Osborne lying dead with a bullet in his heart. Similarly, one of the best English novels about the Second World War is Patrick Hamilton's *The Slaves of Solitude* (1947), set in a Thames Valley boarding house, where the tyranny is practised by domineering old armchair-loungers and the victims are brown-beaten spinsters. While the heroes of William Palmer's and Alan Furst's new novels are both combatants of a kind, each seems exercised less by sudden death than by the emotional detachment canvassed in Hamilton's title. In these circumstances the dangers of flight are regularly anaesthetised by the promise of a brief recall from the disembodied half-state that war imposes on the average mind. As Furst's protagonist puts it, while contemplating his enforced departure from occupied Paris, "The preparation of an escape... whatever else it did, showed you your life from an angle of profound reality."

How best to approximate that reality? It was Christopher Isherwood, back in the days of Herr Ilysovy and Sally Bowles, who popularised the idea of the protagonist as camera lens. The precedent has not been a happy one, and most novels with photographic heroes have a tendency to entice themselves in rather banal theorising about the nature of pictorial representation. Fortunately, Walther Klinger, the focus — no pun intended — of William Palmer's excellent fourth novel, affects a less exalted gaze: "I had a half-apprehended vision of being the cold, implacable eye that regards human folly" he remarks; the laudate of "the gob of phlegm as life turned brown, grey, dead again".

Thus being the Berlin of the Thirties — and the Isherwood connection, if slight, is unavoidable — Walther has a good many opportunities. The opening section of *The Pardon of Saint Anne*, in fact, is a series of snapshots pulled from the reel of a disintegrating world. Living in the French-occupied part of western Germany with his widowed English mother, Walther acquires his first camera from a French officer with whom the mother seems to be having an affair. Subsequent instruction, both in darkroom techniques and seduction strategies, comes courtesy of Valenti, an itinerant Jack-the-Lad who sets himself up as the little spa town's official photographer.

Departing for Berlin in the dog



'Chronicle of evil': Hitler, Albert Speer (right) and Leonard Gall inspect the construction of the House of German Art in Munich

PHOTOGRAPH: ARK

days of Weimar to lodge with his decayed grandmother, Walther finds his horizons sharply transformed in "an atmosphere of abandonment — of morals and conviction and hope". A lifetime's contacts are insufficient to save worldly Uncle Karl from the knock at the door, and Walther's decision to spend the period of his uncle's abduction in bed with a girlfriend ("I don't even remember her name") seems symptomatic of the wider malaise. Walther takes a job on a propaganda sheet called *Sieg*, where Valenti is energetically in control, and balances his day job with covert help for a Jewish art photographer whose business he fronts while the woman shoulders away in the seclusion of her flat.

Abruptly, time fast-forwards to spring 1944 to find Walther, most of his hearing gone in a bomb blast, part of a "crooks brigade" guarding the extreme south-west coast of France and embroiled with an Irishwoman who inhabits a deserted farmhouse. In a world where every action and thought is governed by the prospect of invasion, Palmer's account of the collection of Nazi officers, each seeking solace in some rarefied hobby, carries tre-

mendous psychological conviction. Appropriately enough it is Captain Wahl's anthropological researches, prosecuted by way of a trip to the ecclesiastical ceremony of the title, which set up the novel's climax. Surviving a resistance-laid bomb that kills another of his colleagues, Wahl is charged with sifting through the dead man's belongings. Otto's photographs of the execution squads of the Eastern Front confirm his suspicions and — though the ending is ambiguous — prefigure his own destiny.

Unobtrusively done, with the photographic symbolism quietly shifted into place — "It was the Age of silver. Silver and black," Walther ironically remarks of the rise of the SS — *The Pardon of Saint Anne* is an impressive study of the effect of totalitarianism on the average emotional life. At present William Palmer's reputation languishes in that queer hinterland where the esteem of fellow-writers is cancelled out by the indifference of the world at large. It would be a shame if this novel didn't provoke the attention it clearly deserves.

With jacket salutations from William Boyd and Robert Harris, one rather feels that Alan Furst, in

contrast, has already begun to get his just deserts. Set in occupied Paris circa 1940-41, and featuring a movie-director hero, *The World at Night*, hits some similar targets. Leaving aside the lavishly-framed atmosphere of subterfuge, Furst's novel is built on more or less the same premise: the individual trying to retain some tiny sense of himself in an increasingly unreal world. Like Palmer, Furst is adept at conveying the sense of drift that draws characters into situations they would probably have avoided if presented with a definitive choice.

Thus womanising, fortysomething Casson finds that the simple act of pursuing his livelihood — by making films acceptable to the authorities — drags him into an intricate web of collusion, complicated by an affair with an elusive actress. If anything undermines the novel, it's a slight feeling of genre-sanctioned theatricality (Eric Ambler's name is twice invoked). But even the tasse-poured love interest — all discarded stockings and small-hours cigarettes — can't detract from an absorbing piece of recreated time, for which the publishing taxonomy of "historical spy novel" seems over-modest.

Two years ago, Gitta Sereny

published a monumental study of Speer that probed the other endlessly fascinating aspect of his life. At the Nuremberg Tribunal, Speer was one of two defendants to accept responsibility for the crimes of Hitler's regime, although he denied specific knowledge of its heinous acts. He convinced the judges of his repentance but thereafter argument has raged about what he knew and whether his contrition was genuine. To answer these questions, Sereny interviewed Speer exhaustively and juxtaposed his oral recollections against a mass of other evidence.

Dan Van Der Vat began work on his book about Speer when Sereny's tome was already on the slipway. He decided to await the latter's publication so that he could use it as a "source", while deliberately eschewing the interview method which made it distinctive. Van Der Vat claims that anyone who got too close to Speer inexorably fell under his spell. In his

biography he naughtily lists Sereny's biography under "Speer's corpus". But this device cannot deflect an inevitable comparison of the two works, in which Van Der Vat comes off the worst.

He presents little significant new information about Speer's life and work. In place of Sereny's penetrating psychological analysis, he delivers a few, commonplace observations about the effect of Speer's loveless upbringing. Whereas Sereny inquired deeply into the mutual admiration which Hitler and Speer displayed, he gives short shrift to the notion of a homo-erotic attachment and barely pauses to ask why the two struck up such an enduring friendship. "It was the participants, not their 'relationship' or its well-springs, that were extraordinary."

If Sereny devoted too much attention to the relationship, this was a result of her creditable effort to humanise both men and to understand their motives. Van Der Vat is content with shallow psychobiography and stereotypes, which do the work of explanation. What his study lacks in depth is barely compensated for in its breadth.

He basically accepts Speer's version of the "production miracle" in 1942-44, even though recent research has challenged it. Weapons output rose not because German industry became more efficient, as Speer suggested, but because he bullied industrialists into converting civilian production lines to armaments manufacture. Van Der Vat merely confirms Speer's indifference to the fate of the Jews. The November 1938 pogrom had no impact on him. Speer brushed up against the Final Solution sufficiently often to render his denial of knowledge incredible; but he just didn't care.

Van Der Vat's central charge is that Speer was personally instrumental in evicting 75,000 Berlin Jews in 1941-42, thus ensuring their doom. He knew this was a crime and struggled to cover it up, arranging for the chronicle of his ministry to be "sanitised". While taking broad responsibility for the deeds of the regime, he omitted from his biography any reference to his own particular role. Van Der Vat argues that since his "confession" was incomplete, his famous remorse could not have been genuine. It was part of a strategy of self-preservation and manipulation that he began while awaiting trial in 1945.

Like Sereny's tone, this one is marked by long historical digressions. It is additionally marred by some sloppy writing, flippant asides and appalling word jokes. Pure cheapen what is otherwise a solid biography. Van Der Vat scores some hits, notably his demolition of Speer's claim that he seriously considered assassinating Hitler. His use of the secret chronicle is impressive. Ultimately, however, because his approach lacks psychological depth, the critique of Speer sounds peevish. Speer may have beguiled Sereny, but because she engaged with him, she produced a magisterial portrait of human folly which overshadows Van Der Vat's workmanlike effort.

## 'Aspects' of Oz

Pete Davies treks through the outback

### Independent choice: science books

By Bernard Dixon

**S**tupid things, mirrors," the comedian Tony Hancock said in one of his Sixties radio programmes. "Why can't they reflect things properly?" For many years, the neuropsychologist Richard Gregory has persisted in believing that Hancock's question deserves an answer and that many of those on offer are plainly wrong. His mission has been to show that our experience of mirrors, and of optical illusions, can help us to think about the still mysterious processes of perception. With abundant examples drawn not only from science but also from art, psychology and other domains, his latest book *Mirrors in Mind* (WH Freeman/Spektrum, £25) brings these issues to life with exceptional clarity and vitality.

Hancock's irritation stemmed from the fact that things seen in a looking-glass are reversed from left to right, but not top to bottom. "Mirror writing", for example, does not appear upside down. But this is by no means the only oddity. Look at each of your eyes alternately in a mirror. They do not appear to move. Yet a friend's eyes clearly do move if you ask him or her to look at one of your eyes and then the other. Why?

As Richard Gregory indicates, the first step towards understanding these phenomena is to realise that they raise questions at all. Gregory is an illuminating pilot, leading us through many competing interpretations to his goal of establishing that perception is not a passive acquisition of information from the outside world. It is an active process in which our brain uses past experience as well as incoming sensory cues.

"The paradox of seeing oneself

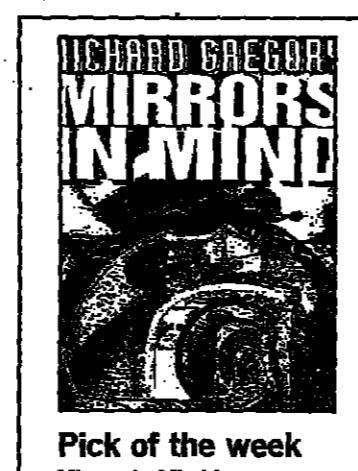
through a mirror while knowing one is in front of it... is not in the mirror or the light," Gregory writes. "It is in our perception. If we were either more or less stupid, such paradoxes might change, or disappear, or become even richer."

Mirrors also appear in *How Brains Think: Evolving Intelligence, Then and Now* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £11.99). The neurophysiologist William Calvin describes how some animals can recognise themselves in a mirror, while others try to attack or befriended the reflected image. A capuchin monkey will spend weeks threatening the "other animal" when a mirror is placed in its cage, whereas chimpanzees know who it is either immediately or within a few days.

Calvin considers and then eliminates the idea of self-recognition as something that intelligence is not. He discards IQ, too, because it is simply "one fascinating aspect of intelligence", which should not subsume others. The capacity for complex behaviour is another tempting definition of intelligence, but not a plausible one because it can be innate, wired in from birth.

Calvin is much more taken by Jean Piaget's notion that intelligence is what you use when you don't know what to do: "This captures the element of novelty, the coping and groping needed when there is no 'right answer'." Yet this seems not to be the entire story, either. Likewise with speed of learning, which is simply related to intelligence". Perhaps, Calvin concludes, intelligent behaviour is really the capacity to combine these and other mental abilities:

This book is not only an assessment of intelligence per se but also an examination of the paradox of seeing oneself



Pick of the week

Mirrors in Mind by Richard Gregory

ination of how evolution has produced increasingly intelligent brains over the last few million years. Calvin brings both strands together by modernising William James's suggestion that thought involves Darwin's concept of the selection of randomly generated novelty. He points to "brain wiring that could operate the fully-fledged Darwinian process, and probably on the milliseconds-to-minutes time-scale of consciousness." This, he says, "has provided me with the best glimpses so far of mechanisms for higher intellectual function: how we can guess, speak sentences we've never spoken before, and even operate on a metaphorical plane."

By no means all Calvin's peers will follow him in discerning Darwin beneath our mental life. Yet it is a challenging theory, founded on a variety of evidence. It requires only a change of time-scale to sound highly plausible: the capacity of cells in the immune system to generate within days, through quasi-Darwinian

process, antibodies to match an astronomical range of antigens which they encounter in invading microbes.

Paul Martin, in *The SICKENING MIND: Brain, Behaviour, Immunity and Disease* (HarperCollins, £16.99) is concerned not with the analogy between mind and the immune system, but with the emerging links between the two. His primary task is to explain how stress and depression may increase our chances of developing infections, heart disease and even cancer. The "why" is important, not least because evidence that we can prevent illness by mobilising mental resources is less overwhelming than popular health books claim.

However, Martin is a sure guide in this controversial field — and an eloquent one. Like Richard Gregory, he bases his case in part on the observations of Shakespeare and other literary giants of the past. But it is contemporary science which most strongly supports his contention that the relationship of mind to health is mediated both by our behaviour, and by biological connections between the brain and the immune system.

Contemporary science is not yet ready to endorse Sir Roger Penrose's elegantly argued suggestion that consciousness itself is associated with the microtubules in brain cells. In *The Large, the Small and the Human Mind* (Cambridge University Press, £14.95), the Oxford mathematician is joined by his critics Abner Shimony, Nancy Cartwright and Stephen Hawking, to review Penrose's theory that thinking takes place by "non-computational" means. The jury is still out, but this book is a stimulating and compact review of Penrose's own thinking.

No Worries: a journey through Australia

by Mark McCrum

Sinclair-Stevenson, £9.99

I once asked a Kiwi if the Maoris ever went to Australia. She said she didn't know, but if they did they'd have thought, Nah. Big hot dry buggy place, this. Then they'd have gone back home — and there are times when Mark McCrum evidently felt the same. Halfway through his book, he sets off round Broome "pessimistically seeking adventure", and I had by then rather come to share his pessimism.

He makes a game stab at understanding the plight of the Aboriginals; he offers lively cameos of the gay scene; he captures the rich and baffling ethnic mix, and he gives intriguing glimpses of the country's green activists. Some are stoned bumbleheads, some (notably those in Tasmania) impressively persuasive. But too rarely does he stop long enough with any one of these matters to get a thorough handle on it.

Some of McCrum's strongest material comes in set pieces in the outback: for instance, in the brutal business of cattle mustering by four-wheel drive and helicopter, or the tragically weird account of an ancient Aboriginal painter knocking out masterpieces in half an hour. (She gets a few hundred dollars for them, but they then sell in galleries for a hundred times that much).

But every time you feel that he's at last getting down into the red dirt of the place, he bounces back off it, as if Australia is just too strange — as if he can't leave his Englishness behind.

Perhaps the problem, after Bill Bryson's success, is that publishers now want every travel writer to be funny. McCrum, certainly, can be witty and engaging — but too many flip asides, too many subjects closed off with a quip and a shrug, make in the end for an incomplete read. They also sit oddly beside the book's extensive, insufficiently edited chunks of interviews with people who are sometimes extremely interesting, and sometimes quite the opposite.

The result is neither fish nor fowl. Early on, McCrum is advised by a Melbourne salesman that if he wants commercial success Down Under, his best approach is to "Tyke the piss" — and when he does so, it's often sharp. But to his credit, he's evidently not cruel or insensitive enough to go all the way down that road, and when he trips up over dark secrets, or gnaws away at troubling issues, humour fades into unresolved concern.

Eventually you want to cry out: Could you make your mind up? Do you like it or don't you? Or, indeed, what aspect?

## Paperbacks

By Boyd Tonkin

**Last Orders** by Graham Swift (Picador, £5.99) In the 1996 Booker winner, four veteran Sarf Londoners carry their butcher-pal's ashes to Margate in a sort of latterday *Canterbury Tales*. Marked by deep craft and complex decency, this seems nonetheless to be a novel that many readers admire rather than love. Why? Swift is that troublesome author, a writer's writer. As with subtle chamber music, his weaving of the four distinct voices as they review their tangled lives may wow the pros but leave the laity cold. Still, it's hard to fault the stoic wisdom of this rueful crew as they approach their terminus (in every sense). "What you've got to understand is the nature of the goods. Which is perishable."

**How to be a Minister by Gerald Kaufman** (Faber, £8.99) The Commons' best (and only?) expert on classic Hollywood musicals dusts down his 1980 primer on another kind of song-and-dance. Aimed at promoted party hacks with their hands on the Red Boxes last, Kaufman's guide to survival in Whitehall advises office-holders how to stop the wiles of the civil service from turning them "into a pod straight out of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*". Robust, witty and sardonic, his book only loses the plot in its dated anecdotes. Tales of Our Hero, in his glory days of the 1970s, trumping the Sir Humphreys to rescue a widget mill in Pontefract or Dewsbury have all the sepiam charm of a *Wakes Week* photo album. Laugh? I almost went out for beer and sandwiches with the TUC.

**Hungry Ghosts: China's secret famine by Jasper Becker** (John Murray, £13) The media requires for Deng Xiaoping have given the impression that only the Tiananmen Square carnage seriously blotted the Great Reformer's copybook. Yet, in his loyal Maoist days of the

mid-1950s, Deng helped launch the mis-named Great Leap Forward in the Chinese countryside. Boasted collectivisation and Stalinism mumbo-jumbo dressed up as genetic science managed to ruin the rural economy. A staggering total of up to 30 million peasants may have starved from 1958 to 1962 in this, the century's worst man-made calamity. As for Deng, Becker's superbly researched and horrifying history shows that he did, in time, come to respect the damning evidence. He launched a campaign to reverse the deadly policies in favour of sane farming, made an enemy of Mao and so provoked his own disgrace during the Cultural Revolution. On Deng's part, the famine may count as a fatal blunder rather than a crime – but that made little difference to its victims.

**The Unruly Queen by Flora Fraser** (Papermac, £10) Although there are sinister parallels between our current version of the Princess of Wales and poor Caroline of Brunswick, whose fate it was to marry the Prince Regent in 1795 – they both suffered from crowded marriage syndrome, caused constitutional uproar by separating from their husbands and were suspicious of palace courtiers – Diana wins hands down when it comes to fashion. Caroline, as Flora Fraser notes in this excellent biography, was a short, dumpy sloven who owned nothing but coarse petticoats. wore her stockings inside out and, on the eve of her wedding, had to be given "some frank instructions about her washing habits" by Lord Malmesbury. It's hardly surprising that Caroline finally took revenge on her adopted country, attempting to storm Parliament during the Coronation and asking while on a visit to inspect the maimed pensioners at Greenwich Hospital: "Do all Englishmen have only one arm or leg?"

**Skin** by Alessandro Baricco, Harvill, £6.99

Don't miss *The Tabloid* next Thursday for details of the 1997 Story of the Year competition. First prize is £2,000, with £500 for the two runners up – and to celebrate the competition's fifth birthday, we will be awarding a special trophy to all three. The winning story



Scene of a crime: before and after view of the vandalised figures of Henry Moore's sculpture, *The King and Queen* PHOTO: FRANK RYAN

## Smash and gab

James Hall wonders why so many critics have joined the demolition business

**The Destruction of Art: Iconoclasm and Vandalism since the French Revolution** by Dario Gamboni, Reaktion Books, £25

**A**fter a day at the British Museum in 1855, the American writer Nathaniel Hawthorne announced with the confidence born of belonging to a youthful nation: "We do not recognize for rubbish what is really rubbish". Four years later, he was even more forthright in *The Marble Faun*, a novel set in Rome. "All towns should be made capable of purification by fire, or of decay within each half-century. Otherwise, they become the hereditary haunts of vermin and noisomeness, besides standing apart from the possibility of improvements".

Cultural cleansing is the subject of Dario Gamboni's *The Destruction of Art*, a well-illustrated and level-headed study of iconoclasm and vandalism since the French Revolution. The subject of iconoclasm is currently a growth industry, but what makes Gamboni's book particularly useful is his refusal to limit himself to high-profile attacks on public sculpture, whether they be Communist monuments in eastern Europe or avant-garde sculptures like Richard Serra's "Tilted Arc". He also discusses more subtle and legalised forms of iconoclasm, perpetrated from above by artists, restorers and museum officials.

Indeed, for Gamboni, our society is predicated on iconoclasm. An obvious example would be the

recent advertising campaign urging us to "chuck out your chintz".

Gamboni starts with the French Revolution because destruction and preservation were linked here as never before. Monuments to the *ancien régime* were systematically destroyed, and artworks stripped from palaces and churches. The worst instance of revolutionary vandalism (the term was coined in 1794) occurred in the abbey of St Denis, where the kings of France had been buried since the middle ages. There, 51 tombs were destroyed during three days of uninterrupted demolition.

But from this holocaust arose the idea of patrimony and national heritage. The best old-master paintings were taken to the Louvre, which was founded by the revolutionaries.

This action was justified on the grounds that, although many art works were dedicated to the ruling classes, they were also testaments to the work of artists, and embodied values that transcended their commission.

The revolutionaries found it much harder to accept the timeless artistic status of French sculpture. Nonetheless, the painter Alexander Lenoir did rescue some sculptures to establish the short-lived Museum of French Monuments. Lenoir provided the first chronological survey of French sculpture and wrote the first systematic catalogue. In order to make his points about the development of sculpture, however, Lenoir changed the appearance of many works beyond recognition. In

1834, Prosper Mérimée observed that clumsy restorers were more dangerous enemies of monuments than Protestants and *sans-culotes*.

Gamboni's best chapter explores the recent demise of communist monuments in Eastern Europe. Many statues were destroyed, and artworks stripped from palaces and churches. The symbolic hanging is the fate that awaited the statue of Felix Dzerzhinsky, founder of the KGB.

Nonetheless, the iconoclasts has not been unanimously approved. Some Muscovites wanted the Dzerzhinsky monument to remain because it was "a part of our history". One woman had hoped to be able to tell her son in future that "this guy was a bastard". With hindsight, some monuments have come to seem a lesser evil, for they are usually replaced by hoardings for Coca-Cola and Mercedes-Benz.

Successors to Lenoir's Museum of French Monuments have been established. A statue park was set up in Moscow near the Tretiakov Gallery (Russia's equivalent of the Tate). However, many statues were simply dumped on the ground in a fragmented and graffiti-covered state. Another sculpture park was opened in 1993 in Budapest: 61 monuments that had suffered repeated attacks were sent there and a poem, "A Sentence on Tyranny", greets visitors at the entrance. These parks work on a similar principle to the Nazis'

Degenerate Art exhibitions. But no doubt they will soon seem as evocative as Roman ruins.

Gamboni brings together a great deal of fascinating information, but he does not really marshal his evidence into a sustained argument. *The Destruction of Art* reads a bit like an anthology of anecdotes. The trouble is that it is almost impossible to identify a psychology of iconoclasm. There are almost as many motives as iconoclasts. The most politically incorrect explanation is given in a cartoon from the 1960s by Ronald Searle, "The Philistines": disabled men threaten gigantic sculptural fragments representing the body part that lacks.

In the past ten years, there has been a flurry of works in which iconoclasm is the central theme, from academic studies, such as David Freedberg's *The Power of Images* (1989) to Andrew Graham-Dixon's TV series, *A History of British Art* (1996). A new genre of art-book documents in detail the birth, life and death of a public sculpture: Richard Serra's "Tilted Arc" (1991) or Rachel Whiteread's "House" (1995).

So why is iconoclasm now being brought into the open? The most obvious reason is that it is the perfect *fin-de-siècle* theme. It is as death-fixated as any hospital drama or film by Quentin Tarantino. Whereas a late-1980s artist like Jeff Koons was obsessed with sex, a 1990s superstar like Damien Hirst is primarily interested in death. We're all hanging around the scene of a crime, looking for casualties.

A week in books

The oddest revelations in Gary O'Connor's much-touted life of Peggy Ashcroft involve the great thespian's passion for cricket. Playing Margaret of Anjou at Stratford in 1963, the *grande dame* of the stage, tucked a radio transmitter into her bra during rehearsals so she could listen to the Test Match. She also organised a Lancashire-Yorkshire charity match: E M E Ashcroft, bowled Len Hutton. Later, cricket chatter would sustain a long "chaste affair" with Harold Pinter.

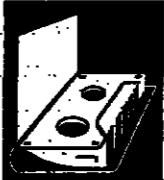
Indeed, O'Connor's *The Secret Woman* (Weidenfeld, £20) omits to notice that – if you ignore her first and last husbands, and the passing trade – Dame Peggy's now-famous roster of celebrity lovers makes up an eleven. This team bats all the way down, with a slight loss of sparkle in the middle: J B Priestley, Paul Robeson, Walter Sickert, Mark Dignam, Theodore Komisarjevsky, Michel Saint-Denis, Billy Buchar (John's son), Burgess Meredith, Tony Britton, William Devlin, George Devine. (Pinter could be the non-playing coach.) As a new twist to the showbiz bio, this has potential. Coming soon: Dame Edith Evans and the *cateraccio* defence.

After finishing O'Connor's book, you crave some escape from the suffocating limits of its genre. As a "property" as well as a text, it reveals what's gone wrong with the tacky trade in private lives. Extracted in the press for the usual handshake fee attached to sex with the stars, the mushy passages that name those paramours will become the book for most of its audience. Few will bother now about its critical lapses.

Before she died in 1991, Dame Peggy worked with Michael Billington on a sound survey of her roles, from Juliet to *The Jewel in the Crown*. Sex, in other words, is all O'Connor has to sell, as he can't quote from letters (the children refused him permission). Even so, he fails to build a solid bridge between the turbulent off-stage soul and the regal, even chilly star. And his syntax brings to mind a knitting-basket after the attentions of a pair of frisky kittens. We even learn that "Harriet" Walter first met Peggy when she was 74 – bad news for Ms Walter. But who needs an editor when the papers will bombard you with big cheques for soft-centred tit-tat-tat? The book is a meretricious muddle. And so is the publishing culture that wraps shabby goods in sensation-seeking hype.

Boyd Tonkin

## Audiobooks



**Classic Railway Murders** (CSA Tapes, 2hrs 45 mins, £9.99) offers four tales from the age of steam. Well-contrasted writers, first-rate production; versatile readings by Patrick Malahide. Plays well heard rather than seen, especially when they offer, as Oscar Wilde always does, an aphorism a minute. *Lady Windermere's Fan* (Naxos, 1hr 43 mins, £7.99) is a topical tale in the context of today's moral panic, and the final scene between the mysterious Mrs Elayne (Juliet Stevenson) and Lady Windermere (Sarah Fielding) is powerful theatre.

Christina Hardymon

## The worm in the bud

Harriet Paterson slips into a smooth tale of eastern promise

**Silk** by Alessandro Baricco, Harvill, £6.99

Alessandro Baricco is hot publishing property in Italy, a rare commodity in a country where literary fiction is struggling to keep its head above water. He wins prizes with ease; for his novels, of which this is the third. An effortless little book, *Silk* is the work of an author who knows how to please – as do his publishers, who have wrapped the book in the smoothest, silkiest laminate you're likely to find. The text is set like a long prose poem, tiny chapters surrounded by acres of white space, encouraging the tranquil sensations which reading the book produces.

Hervé Joncour, a young 19th-century merchant, buys silkworms for a living. As an epidemic which affects the silkworms spreads through Europe, Hervé travels further and further to find unblemished eggs: beyond the Mediterranean, to Syria



**The ease and high silken finish suggest that Baricco is coasting**

cadence – in Guido

Waldman's translation, as in the original. Here there will be no image out of place, no unruly ordering of words.

Perhaps the only stylistic lapse comes towards the end, where he indulges in a burst of stream-of-consciousness criticism which it is hard not to find comic in the midst of an otherwise restrained work.

Baricco is less interested in historical detail than in creating a broadly poetic tale which leaves behind a number of distinct *tableaux*: a sky full of precious exotic birds released from their aviary, two men sitting

looking out over a lake where a concubine is swimming, an orange dress and two straw sandals left lying on the ground.

The ease and high silken finish of the writing suggest that Baricco is coasting after his more substantial novels, especially *Oceano Mare* with its probing questions about the nature of memory.

Nevertheless, this small but perfectly formed novella offers an elegant and unfrazzled entry into his work; and if a writer wishes to switch from sustained narrative verse to the art of haiku, then who am I to argue?

## Surface tensions

Elisa Segrave faces the ugly truth about cosmetic surgery

**Skin** by Joanna Briscoe, Phoenix House, £16.99

**Y**ou will certainly never want a face-lift after reading this novel. Its heroine Adèle Meier, a former beauty and a best-selling author who invented a subversive character called Loulou, finds herself in middle-age, living alone in Paris. She is no longer with Laurence, her great love, whom she met in New York as a young woman. Once, Laurence left his wife and baby for her. Now he has returned to England and married a conventional English wife.

Joanna Briscoe describes in graphic detail the facial operations Adèle embarks on in Paris in order to stave off the signs of approaching age: "the surgeon removed a string of fat from the patient's eyelid. This was shining yellow and lumpy in texture" while "the patient's cheek... flopped over her ear, unattached, rooted only at the mouth, nose and eyes". In between each operation and its painful after-effects, Adèle's past unfolds. Her Austrian parents emigrated to Virginia with 14-year-old Adèle, her older sister Kati and her two brothers John and Karl. Her father abandoned them for a local woman while Adèle was still a teenager. A few years later her mother died of a heart attack. Adèle went north, first to New Jersey, then to New York.

Adèle's narcissism in middle age makes her seem unsympathetic. We do not learn about her girlhood until later. I am not sure how far Briscoe intended to create such an immediately unlikeable character. Adèle's cold-blooded seductions of two young men in Paris, undertaken

mainly to convince herself that she still has sexual power, are described with skillful eroticism. I must admit to envy – both of Briscoe for her writing and of Adèle herself for nailing two young men at her age. Nonetheless, this lack of emotion makes these scenes ultimately chilling. Indeed, apart from her love for her stepdaughter, Melina (hospitalised in England with anorexia), Adèle often seems so self-absorbed that I found it difficult to believe that she had written a best-selling book with universal appeal.

"Loulou has very exotic sex and manipulates men and says what most women only dare to think in their secret minds," Adèle says, explaining her book's success to an audience of fans in Paris. But although she has won acclaim for inventing a contemporary feminist idol, Adèle knows that she has always relied heavily on male admiration. "I always needed my Holy Grail, the male with his hormones and his gifts to me", she admits to herself. And yet, long ago in New York, during her heady period as a young beauty, she had already half-realised the flip side of sexual magnetism. "I was excited by men as I was injured by men. It's a compulsion... men make you feel so terrible, so high, you are their circus animal, pretty pelt and leash".

This accomplished, intelligent novel throws up interesting questions. Are beautiful women different? Is ageing actually worse for them, because they are accustomed to depend on their looks? Do very beautiful women often become narcissistic when young?

In one poignant moment, while recovering from facial surgery, Adèle remembers the older women she used to see on

the Upper East Side where – in her twenties, at the height of her attractiveness – she worked as personal secretary to a German banker's wife. She never gave these women and their face-lifts more than a passing thought but now, alone in Paris, she recalls the "shark grins of effort stretching their features" and their eyes, "widened with simulated youth and yet precisely blank, a dull dead glint".

Worrying, too late, about the cycle of operations she has inflicted on herself, she realises that she is no different from them. "The surgical interventions create a homogenised tribe: women who resemble each other, sisters under the skin."

Skint has some beautiful passages, in particular when Adèle tells how she and Laurence first fell in love. I also liked the descriptions of her youth in New York, where, after a stint in the Martha Washington women's hostel and some unsatisfactory flat-shares, she settles with two girlfriends in "a brownstone in the dusty and blossomed upper reaches of Greenwich Village, on West 13th Street, where the white church struck bells and Sixth Avenue was a clutter of shoe repairers and discount shops".

There are also many memorable vignettes and pithy remarks about men, as when Laurence first makes love to her: "He was different, in the way that men are when they are erect and as vulnerable as boys with sticks, and sinewy and Biblical and alarming".

But I suspect that *Skin* will be remembered most for its powerful evocation of panic and loneliness: of that disturbing moment when every woman is forced to realise, for the first time, that she too will grow old.

# travel & outdoors



Crossing six time zones, the Trans-Mongolian Express breaks many other barriers. PHOTOGRAHPS: LANDMANN/FSP



## Through Russia with love

This afternoon a party of intrepid British astronomers departs from Moscow by train for Mongolia and China. Nine years ago, Jeremy Atiyah travelled the other way, through a quite different world

Moscow was only 24 hours east, but the Russian capital could have been a light year back down the track. That winter in Berlin the fog over Alexanderplatz still had the sad smell of coal dust and Communism, but I didn't care. Metres away, cocooned in its wall, West Berlin was a city of dreams. Its centre comprised budget supermarkets, designer sex shops, ongoing student demonstrations and one memento of the Second World War: the ruined Kaiser Wilhelm Church. Somewhere out there, among the punks in Bahnhof Zoo and the grandes dames wearing fur coats, on Ku'damm, was a girl called Xiaosong, dressed in red for her first day in the free West. On a winter's day in the city of dreams, I was looking for a girl from Communist China.

Was it only seven days since we had met, in the restaurant car of a train somewhere in the vicinity of Mongolia? Professor Zhang and his comrades were eating their last Chinese dinner, and teaching me how to use chopsticks. "This is the b-i-best day of our lives," giggled the professor. Yes, China was that bad. All these worn-out intellectuals were leaving their families for the sake of science scholarships in Continental Europe. Only Xiaosong in the oversized red coat was different; she plonked herself at the table with a smile to light up the wintry Mongolian steppe for ever. "Literature," she whispered in a pure, seamless accent. "In Deutschland. You don't speak German?" I didn't.

"Oh yes," Professor Zhang confided in the next morning. "M-m-many Chinese girls want to m-m-marry Western men." Outside, the sun shone weakly on a treeless, snow-flecked land and I wondered why he was telling me this. It transpired that he was carrying in his pocket lists of Chinese women seeking marital alliances with Western men. But apart from me, the only other man in our carriage was a melancholy Yugoslav with a suitcase full of vodka.

The crowded carriages at the other end of the train were more promising for thoughts of marriage. Xiaosong was there for a start. I decided to visit her, hauling open the connecting carriage-doors one by one, exposing myself to the din of wheels and blasts of ferocious winter. In the last carriage, I found her ensconced in a compartment with a group of Chinese boys, also, perhaps, going to West Germany to study literature.

"Oh no. We are going to East Germany," one of them explained. "To work in the mines."

I was muttering something about short straws when one Erhard Kempe suddenly arrived from the bathroom. He had a

morose expression and pronounced Germany "Charman". East German police? I wish he had been. He turned out to be a fluky West German tourist from Hanover with a berth in the same compartment as Xiaosong.

Undaunted, I returned that evening with a bottle of brandy which I drank all by myself. I ate Xiaosong's chocolates impulsively, admired her tape of Chinese pop music and requested that she write out the incomprehensible lyrics of one of the songs, "Maybe in Winter". Erhard fought back by embarking on a lengthy explanation of the "Charman" education system. Fortunately, we still had the whole of Russia to cross.

The Soviet Union arrived at midnight with lights on the snow, a watch-tower, barbed wire, and soldiers in long coats running beside the train. "I-h-h-h Russia," said Professor Zhang in a high-pitched whisper, as blond men probed into mounds of rubble, shinning a mysterious blue against the snow-laden sky.

Professor Zhang was obsessed with my conjugal status. He appeared daily at my doorway, asking when I would marry. Not in the near future, I barked, teichly. Siberia, and Erhard's long-winded accounts of German history, were wearing me down. For three days, the landscape consisted of melancholy birch forests, interspersed by villages of wooden houses suffocating under the continuous snow. At Novosibirsk I changed money with a man in a dirty coat; at Sverdlovsk I bought a hard-boiled egg. On the last day Xiaosong dropped by to give me a contact address - in Hannover.

There was no red carpet for our final arrival in Moscow. Instead, the platform was covered in a thick, dirty slush. In drabs and drabs, the passengers from China transferred across town to Belarusskaya Station, where I volunteered to stand in a Soviet queue to make our onward reservations to Berlin. I stood in, heroically, for four hours.

Only in mid-afternoon was I ready for a tourist rampage round Moscow with my Chinese bride-to-be. As it turned out, Xiaosong had already asked Professor Zhang and eight other Chinese friends to join us, along with Erhard Kempe. Never mind. Wet, romantic snow was falling as darkness fell. I saw uneven pavements, pink stucco and tall women on the underground escalators with pale faces and fury hats. In the streets, the last rays of a maverick sun suddenly fell on to the spires of the Kremlin. En masse, we stormed the Hotel Rossiya on Red Square for a round of vodkas, for which I ostentatiously emptied my wallet.

From Moscow to Berlin, we still had another 24 hours of Pot Noodles and Chinese tea, but by now emotional excitement and brandy was destroying my mind. The train was crowded and overheated, and I awoke to the sounds of raucous, collective snoring. Disconsolate, I sat in the half-light corridor to wait for a grey day to slide past over Poland. Outside, on the plains, the last shreds of snow had almost gone.

Professor Zhang was jubilant at having smuggled his dollars through Russia in the lining of his briefcase. Erhard was waxing ever more eloquent as we approached his homeland. But I was tired. And when they appeared, the East German border police - with their fat faces, military accents, torches, peaked caps and shining boots - looked remarkably like unreconstructed Nazis. Our belongings were microscopically examined. Professor Zhang was suddenly ordered to leave the train. Horror! There he was, now speechless with fear, putting on three pairs of trousers, manically packing away his pots and cups and chopsticks. The last we saw of him, he stood alone, a little man on the platform beside a ton of luggage. The winter took on a nightmarish hue.

East Berlin was out of sight before we knew it, and Xiaosong was the next to disappear. The Ostbahnhof was infernally dark, packed with shrieking, groaning engines and hissing with jets of steam. Soviet soldiers in long coats stood like ghosts in the shadows. One minute Xiaosong was there - the next she had gone. I had visions of a plot. Victim picked off one by one! I blundered about emotionally in the darkness, convinced that no one could escape Communism in winter.

Amid the panic, a familiar face loomed out of the darkness: Erhard Kempe. "Ver-

is the young lady?" he exclaimed, roughly. Well, at least he didn't know either. Instead he angrily escorted me through the darkness to the West Berlin train where I found the only remaining Chinese. Yu Wei, in a colossal furry hat, mumbly through his hand about wanting to see the West. He had just two minutes to wait. The train creaked through Alexanderplatz and then over the Berlin Wall itself. The ghostly no-man's-land with its floodlights illuminating the death-strip

inspired Yu Wei, oddly, to start invoking Proust and Yeats as the embodiment of his Western dream.

I couldn't help thinking that the West was mainly about nice cars and decent accommodation. Or so I told myself. Gloomily, as I checked into a hotel later that night. Yu Wei had presented me with his fury winter hat and departed for Frankfurt, while Erhard had bought me a copy of *The Times*. "A real piece of sh. Charman" hospitality," he had said,

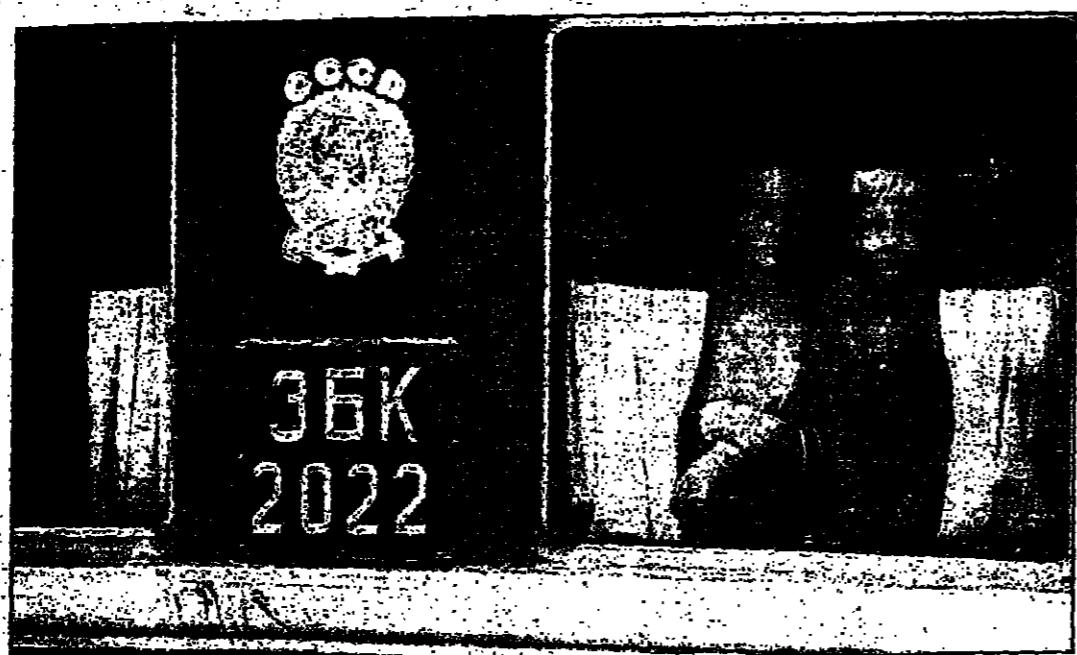
grasping my hand like a spanner before marching away into the mist.

In bed at last, I drifted into the dreams of West Berlin. Would the skateboarders around the Kaiser Wilhelm Church be feeling the cold tomorrow morning? Would I find the girl from Communist China? The tune of "Maybe in Winter" began playing in my mind. One day, I dreamt, Xiaosong would tell me what its lyrics meant.

Jeremy Atiyah married Xiaosong in 1991

### Express yourself

Regular trains operate between Moscow and Peking, with connections from Western Europe and to Hong Kong. Most travellers make the week-long journey in only one direction, and fly the other. A basic round trip of a flight from London to Moscow, train to Peking and onwards to Hong Kong, with a flight back to London, would cost about £750 through companies such as Bridge to the World (0171-911 0900), Regent Holidays (0117-921 1711) and the Russia Experience (0181-566 8846). There are endless stopover possibilities, but these can add substantially to the cost.



Berlin or bust: the train carried the hopes of Chinese and East Europeans who make the break to the West

## Traditions of Arabia



A reddish dye obtained from powdered leaves, henna has traditionally been used by the women of Arabia to stain the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet for weddings and other festivals. The simple geometric patterns of the past have given way over the years to more flowing designs.

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## something to declare

### World guide to where to be mugged

**T**heft threats around the world, according to the Foreign Office Travel Advice Unit (0171-238 4509). **Indonesia:** Be alert. There has been an increase in petty crime against foreigners, including several incidents of knife attacks in the town of Brastagi in Sumatra and while climbing Mount Sibayak nearby. (*The Independent* comments that one of our correspondents fairly recently spent four peaceful days in Brastagi, "a friendly, quiet little town. The place where you really need to watch out for yourself is Medan, an hour's bus ride away. People in Brastagi will warn you that foreigners in this big city are invariably hassled, pickpocketing is rife and mugging common.") **Iran:** There has recently been a number of cases of tourists being asked for identification by bogus policemen, who have then made off with the visitors' wallets and currency. Keep passports separate from other valuables. **Madagascar:** There is a

danger of mugging and pickpocketing in urban areas. Precautions should be taken in crowded areas such as the popular Ammanarivo market. Do not carry excessive amounts of money or wear jewellery, wristwatches, etc. It is advisable to carry a photocopy of your passport.

**Sierra Leone:** There has been an increase in reported incidents of armed robbery in the past six months.

**Swaziland:** There is a growing number of muggings, burglaries and car thefts, with expatriates being targeted. Several vehicles have been taken at gunpoint. It is inadvisable to pick up hitchhikers.

**Tanzania:** Incidents of mugging and theft are common, especially on public transport and beaches. Food should not be accepted from strangers as it may be drugged. Armed car thefts, particularly of four-wheel-drive vehicles, occur fairly frequently, and may be accompanied by personal violence.

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### A likely story

"The world's favourite airline"

Like the Carlsberg claim—"probably the best lager in the world"—BA's assertion is an easy one to make: there is no scientific standard for judging mass-produced lager or air travel. But for British long-haul leisure travellers surveyed by Anstruther, "the world's favourite" barely rates a mention.

The questionnaire, completed by 15,000 flyers, covered five categories on more than 20 airlines. For politeness, Anstruther has published only the top 10 in

countless British Airways ads each category. British

Airways scrapes in at number 10 for "helpfulness" and "manners of cabin crew", to BA's chagrin, its charter rival Britannia is third, behind Singapore Airlines and All Nippon Airlines of Japan. These also rate highly in the categories where BA is absent: *catering, comfort, entertainment, and value for money*. The last category was won easily by All Nippon, which may want to adopt the slogan "We'll take more care of you".

### Bargain of the week

The freedom of

Newcastle-upon-Tyne: fly to the city with Gill Airways (0191-214 6666) – for example from Aberdeen, Belfast or Düsseldorf – keep hold of your boarding pass.

and the airline ticket desk at Newcastle airport will give you a ticket for the Metco system to take you from the airport station to anywhere on Tyneside. The offer runs for the whole of March.



San Sebastián – a sensual surfeit of sights, sounds and tastes

PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD PASSMORE/TSW

# Basque out of the shade

San Sebastián is the capital of a culture that has finally stamped its name back on the map ... as well as the gastronomic dictionary, writes Mick Webb

**T**his is, and yet isn't, Spain. The crowds of people taking an evening stroll through the old town, stopping off for a glass of wine, some tapas and a chat are doing what Spaniards do, but they're doing it more quietly, less demonstratively, and they're wearing overcoats and carrying umbrellas.

Contrary to the popular saying, the rain in Spain falls mainly here, on the northern coast, which is why tourist brochures describe the local weather euphemistically as "mild and pleasant". Surprisingly, it was the climate that first marked San Sebastián out as a tourist resort in the mid-19th century, attracting Queen Isabella II and her court away from the summer heat of Madrid to this elegant town, recently rebuilt after a disastrous fire and blessed with a beautiful beach.

It's appropriately named *la concha* (the shell), and it forms a perfect, semicircular bay, whose entrance is protected from the worst excesses of the Atlantic by a tiny island.

I've got a soft spot for *la concha*. Twenty-odd years ago, I spent my first ever night in Spain sleeping on it, lulled to sleep by the sound of the waves and the effects of a bottle of wine that I vaguely remember costing 10 pesetas. That was in August, mind you. This time (in winter), I'm only too happy to find a comfortable bed in a hotel and stroll down to the beach after breakfast.

And the airline ticket desk at Newcastle airport will give you a ticket for the Metco system to take you from the airport station to anywhere on Tyneside. The offer runs for the whole of March.

It's on a Saturday morning like this, out of season, that you realise how a beach in summer can be a mass human barbecue. But today it's a park where people are walking their dogs, jogging, reading the paper, while from this esplanade a less active contingent of us are happy to lean on the railings and simply watch.

Basque culture has reasserted itself, and the language banned for 40 years by Franco is now flourishing. The city has acquired a new name, Donostia; the names above the shops and bars are full of tongue-twisting clusters of consonants — Zumacaláriqu, Gorkieta, and the street signs are in two languages. Donostia has played its part in ETA's long and violent campaign for independence from the Spanish state and, on a damp Friday evening, the rush-hour traffic was slowed more than usual by a demonstration of 100 or so people moving silently and purposefully through the city centre. They were holding up placards with photos of their loved ones, ETA activists, who have been incarcerated in far-off Ceuta and Melilla. It's a regular Friday event,

watched with mild but respectful interest by shoppers and drinkers, and it reveals the other side of a city that's best known for a host of international music and film festivals, and as a rather upmarket seaside resort.

The city has its fair share of interesting museums, and churches, as well as some excellent walks, and I'd thoroughly recommend a couple of hours spent watching the game of pelota. It's fast, furious and fun, particularly the variety called *remonte*, which involves a wicker basket attached to the players' wrists, from which a ball is propelled against a wall at phenomenal speed. And if you think the game sounds odd, its singularity is matched by the betting — old tennis balls stuffed with peseta notes are thrown between spectators and bookmakers through the ever-thickening cigarette smoke.

The Basques are the great chefs of Spain, and here on their home turf their art flourishes. There are 11 Michelin stars scattered around the city's many restaurants, and the two best-known practitioners, Juan Mari Arzak and Pedro Subijana, convert

traditional recipes into the most elaborate modern dishes. Just a glance at the menu of El Akelarre, Sr Subijana's restaurant, sends our taste buds into an uncontrollable spin: fricassee of lambs' sweetbreads with vegetables and sautéed squid; hake fillets with clams in green sauce; citrus fruits in puff pastry with caramel; fresh cheese ice-cream.

San Sebastián is very much the pretty face of the Basque country. If you go inland, the hills that provide such a scenic backdrop to the city conceal the valleys that themselves hide the rather ugly and forbidding villages crammed into them. I remembered from my first visit that what was odd about the interior of the Basque country was the way that traditional farming and quite large industrial plants and factories existed side by side. In these post-industrial days it looks even weirder. I drove up out of San Sebastián into a faint coating of snow along mountain roads, passing abandoned paper mills, gaunt iron skeletons that might have been created by the great Basque sculptor, Txillida. I had a very clear recollection from my earlier visit of the lurid yellow and green rivers created by industrial effluent from the mills — and the hideous smell that arose from them. Not now, though: they are clean enough and fresh enough to star in any advert or grace any tourist brochure.

well-off residents of San Sebastián can afford to buy fish, and to use it as the basis of the new Basque cuisine.

But there is another reason why the gastronomic arts have taken root here, hidden behind heavy doors. San Sebastián is full of gastronomic clubs, whose members gather together to talk and drink, but mainly to cook, rivalling each other in the preparation of delicious meals.

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Cross purposes: a pilgrim reaches the end of her journey to Santiago de Compostela

PHOTOGRAPH:

BRIAN HARRIS

An early night, and then off again at eight the next morning, this time at a snail's pace as I tried to force my unhappy feet into service. After a couple of hours, their objections lessened and I picked up speed. I stopped only for coffee in Ponferrada and then hastened on again.

Flatter now, the road took me to the ancient village of Locubel, I paused in a bar in an indifferent bar, where elderly men were playing a noisy game of cards, and then attacked the last section of the day's march, to Villafranca. By the time I got there, my blistered feet had all but beaten my pilgrim will. Then I rounded a corner and stopped in my tracks. The declining sun reflected off a gleaming tiled roof. On one side of the road stood a welcoming, only partly occupied *parador*; on the other, one of nature's weariest beasts. I gave it immediately.

This burst of energy lasted several hours and saw me down the road that runs through the village of El Acebo to within sight of Molinaseca, where I found a room at Hostal El Palacio, beside the Romanesque bridge over the river Meruelo.

are the simple *fondas*. A hostel is slightly more expensive and better furnished than a *fonda*. In this one, my room included half a bath. By walking up the wall above the taps, I could get most of my torso submerged. Bliss.

I took my stiff and painful leave just before dawn to start the ascent into the mountains to the west. Some 350 metres higher and still more than 10 km from the village, I reached the *refugio* of Foncebadón. I remembered that there was said to be an iron cross near here. Traditionally, pilgrims have a certain status in that part of Spain — passing motorists beep horns in recognition and small children shout "Olé, peregrino!" My original, hedonistic motivation became a more ascetic determination to complete the journey.

I awoke early the next morning, this time at a snail's pace as I tried to force my unhappy feet into service. After a couple of hours, their objections lessened and I picked up speed. I stopped only for coffee in Ponferrada and then hastened on again.

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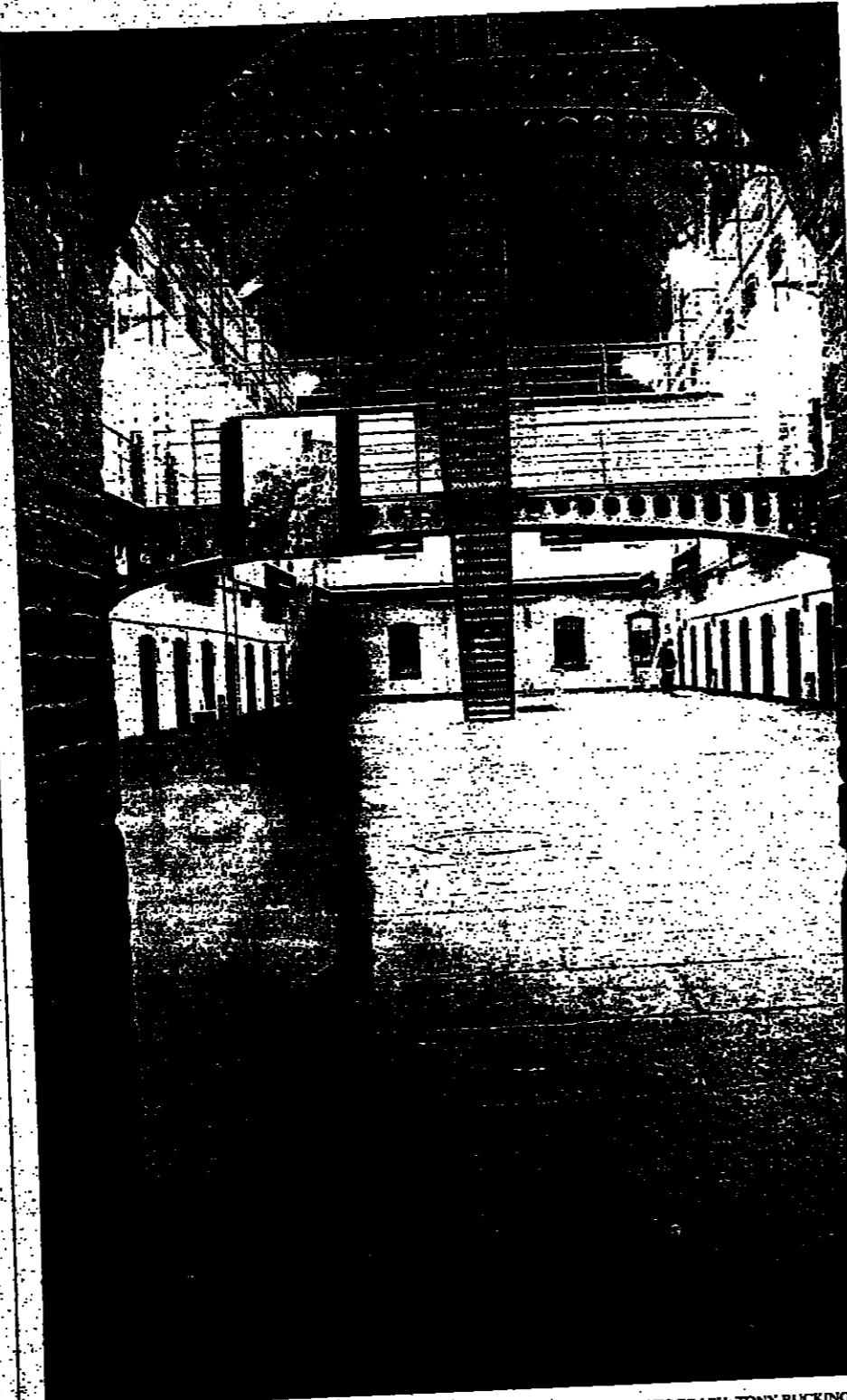
**Dover Old Town Gaol, Biggin Street, Dover, Kent (01304 242766)** Dover's fully restored prison houses a suitably grim collection of inmates whose crimes include smuggling, murder and, in the case of several small boys, rabbit theft. The "horror and the tragedy" the museum promises come via hi-tech talking heads and animation. Visitors can also witness a trial in the imposing Victorian courtroom, wander through the exercise yard and squeeze into a cell. Guided tours run hourly throughout the day. Open Wed-Sat, 10am-4.30pm, Sun 2pm-4.30pm. Prices: adults £3.20, concs and children £1.90, children under five, free.

**Miclegate Bar Museum, Miclegate, York (01904 634436)** Royal visitors to York traditionally arrived via Micklegate Bar, and it was customary to decorate its entrance with the heads of recently hanged traitors. The gatehouse is now home to an exhibition charting 800 years of York's history; displays include about 40 heads in various states of decay. Open Sat-Sun, 9am-6pm; from Easter until the end of October it will be open seven days a week 9am-6pm. Prices: adults £1.50, students and OAPs £1, under-16s accompanied by an adult 50p.

**Cirencester Lock-up, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Key from the Corinium Museum, Park Street, Cirencester (01285 655611)** Known locally as "the dumping house" because of its domed roof, the Lock-up is a tiny prison with two cells and only one window grille. It remains closed for much of the year; most visitors choose to peer in through the bars. Open by arrangement with the Corinium Museum (opens at the end of March - call first); November-March, Tues-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2pm-5pm; April-October, Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2pm-5pm; Prices: adults £1.60, concs £1.40, students £1, children 80p, family ticket £4.

Charlotte Packham

The Kilmainham Jail in Dublin sheds light on a dark age. By Alan Murdoch



PHOTOGRAPH: TONY BUCKINGHAM

Block booking: the Kilmainham Jail Museum

**D**ublin's Kilmainham Jail Museum brings a searing reality to the lives of its sometimes anonymous, sometimes famous inmates. It was, after all, the place where a Who's Who of Irish nationalists leaders, from Robert Emmet to Parnell to de Valera, heard the thud of metal doors clang behind them.

In the past year, the once gloomy prison museum's permanent exhibition has been brought to life with theatrical flair and £1m of public funds to explain how famine, civil disorder and war came to land so many inside. Its balance of dignified treatment of the tragedy of Irish leaders' executions here and the opportunity to engage younger visitors through video-age techniques has recently been recognised with a Large Museum of the Year award from the Gulbenkian Foundation.

Kilmainham was the world's first jail used exclusively for political prisoners, yet its grey stone passages also provide the ideal cautionary trip back into stern Victorian times for harassed parents of adolescents.

The early prison "reformers" Jeremy Bentham and John Howard, zealous for extracting repentence and for the "fabrication of virtue", saw their vision given full rein here. They favoured harsh, hygienic and "fair" punishment as an alternative to the squalor of 18th-century prisons, in which more prisoners were killed by disease than by the ever-busy gallows.

In the new display, "humane" refinements of hanging – largely through the longer-drop, quicker-farewell technique developed by Professor Samuel Haughton of Trinity College, Dublin – are explained in neck-tingling detail.

Young people are encouraged to take part in the age-old debate about hanging by casting a vote in a computer poll; they can then see, in graphic form on screen, the latest balance of visitors' opinions for and against, presented by age group in graphic form on screen.

In 1796 Kilmainham was rearranged on the principles of one prisoner, one cell – and soon became overcrowded. Convict

numbers soared during the famine in the late 1840s when the starving were imprisoned in their thousands for possession of stolen bread-and-butter, and theft of apples or even turnips.

The prison's grim regime is clearly illustrated by the authorities' attitude towards rations. On discovering that prisoners got four ounces of bread more than workhouse inmates, an enraged inspector, Philip Priestley, demanded: "This alarming gap must be closed".

Even the mildest Victorian punishment aimed to exert maximum control over the inmate – and to ensure that the prisoner knew it. One exhibit is a cell-door eye-slot revealing a miniature woman's unversed reaction to the warden's watching eye. And in an adjacent closed-circuit television room, visitors become warden-monitors of the jail and, eerily, of themselves.

As for political prisoners, after 1798, French-influenced United Irishmen were held here, as was Robert Emmet before his 1803 public execution; in 1848 Young Ireland rebels followed; then, in 1867, Fenians were incarcerated, betrayed by informants. After this, criminals were moved out, turning Kilmainham into a jail exclusively for political detainees.

In 1881, these included the nationalist leader Charles Stewart Parnell and his Land Leaguers, who defended Irish tenant farmers from evictions and rejected Westminster's Land Acts.

His release followed the 1882 Kilmainham Treaty, securing Parnell's co-operation with the British Prime Minister William Gladstone's Liberal government.

Kilmainham's climactic moment came in the 20th century, when 14 Easter Rising leaders were shot here between 3 and 12 May, 1916. In a darkened passageway their family photographs, letters, pens and spectacles are laid out in individual spotlit alcoves, like shrines to the executed.

While the curator, Pat Cooke, acknowledges the value of a recent reassessment of 1916 by Irish historians, the museum avoids a didactic narrative. "We present the nationalist 'physical force' tradition

in its own terms and allow people to react in their own way," he says.

This means admitting to the complex, mixed backgrounds of the 1916 leaders. Some even had English parentage, a fact that contradicts the nationalist stereotype. Paradoxes continued when the jail changed hands.

British withdrawal left the prison controlled by pro-Treaty forces under Michael Collins, who appointed an IRA friend as governor over former comrades during the bloody 1922-1924 civil war. By November 1922, after Collins's death, Free State (pro-Treaty) forces were holding their own executions here.

Between April and September 1923, 300 anti-Treaty hardliners of the IRA's women's division were imprisoned in Kilmainham and nearby Grangegorman (the main setting for Neil Jordan's film *Michael Collins*).

In time-honoured tradition, the women began tunnelling their way out, using metal spoons, but had got only a few feet before being discovered. After the women's release, Eamon de Valera, Sinn Fein leader (and opponent of Michael Collins during the civil war), later Taoiseach and President, became Kilmainham's final prisoner. He lived to see the building renovated by admiring volunteers in the Sixties. Today its dramatic associations continue. Key scenes from *In the Name of the Father*, featuring Daniel Day-Lewis and Gerry Conlon of the Guildford Four, were filmed here in 1993.

**The Kilmainham Jail Museum, Dublin (00353 1 4359841), is at the junction of Inchicore Road and the South Circular Road, Dublin 8 (opposite the Irish Museum of Modern Art at Royal Hospital, Kilmainham).**

**Opening times:** Monday to Friday 9.30am-5pm (last tour 7.5 minutes before closing.) Guided tours only: Saturdays: closed in winter. Open 10am-6pm (last tour 4.45pm.)

**Admission:** adults £2; senior citizen £1.50; children or students £1. Bus routes: Nos 51, 51B, 78A, 79 from city centre.

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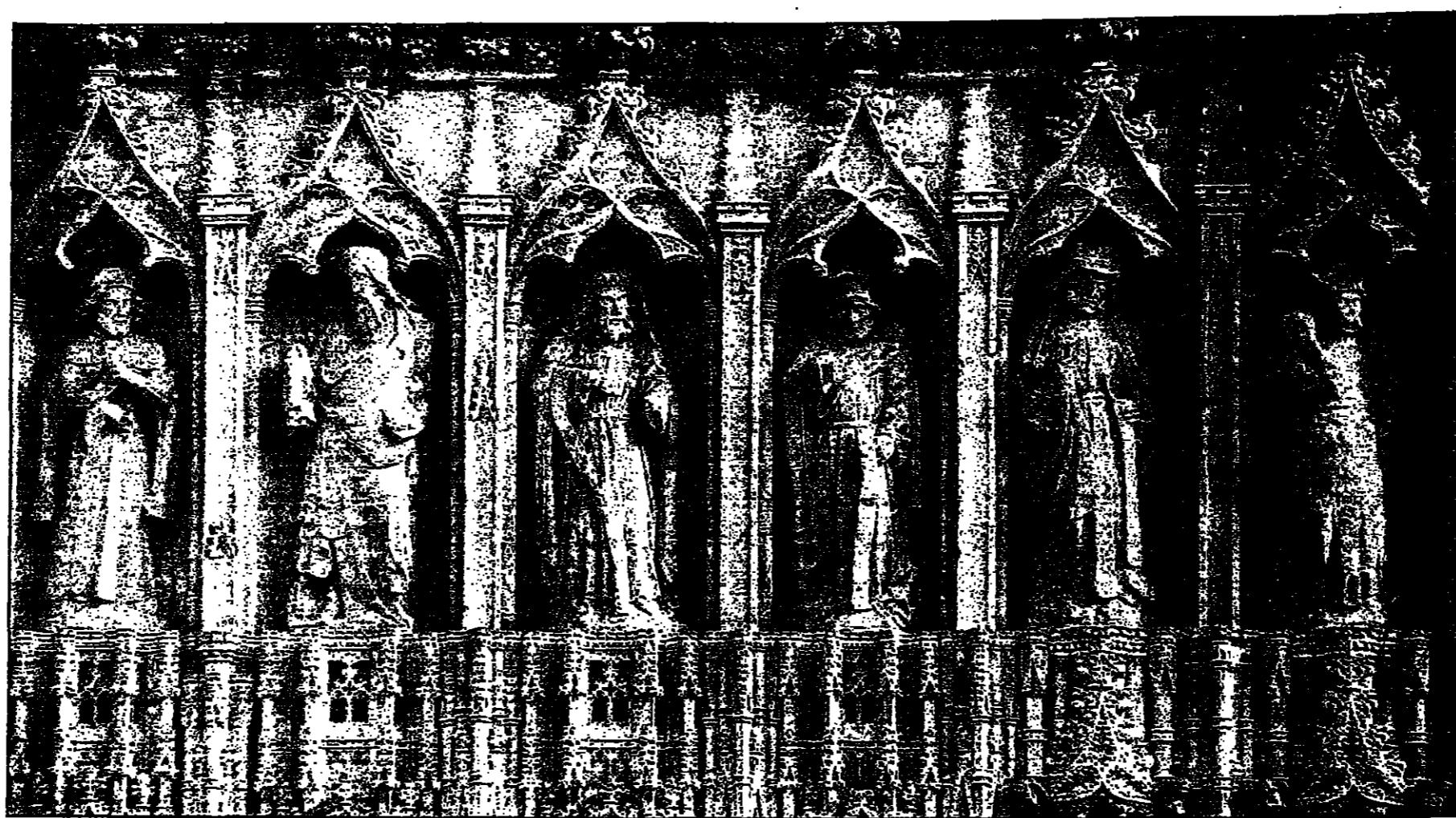
Simon Calder tracks down miracles of masonry and cake-making

**F**oreign aggressors. Fifties planners and municipal modesty – all conspire to conceal the reality that Exeter is a fine, walled city. Worse still, the dark forces of Railtrack and South West Trains have this week been deflecting all but the most determined visitor from travelling to the South-West's largest city. My plan was to catch the dawn train from Waterloo on Saturday. But figuratively sealing the twin barricades of overrunning engineering works and staff shortages took until Tuesday lunchtime.

William I endured an even more troublesome arrival in 1068, when for 18 days, Exeter's defenders stubbornly refused to accept that the Norman was a Conqueror. From his encampment beside the ford on the road from London he had plenty of time to survey the fortifications before he waded across the "Long Brook". Today, wading is optional. But you should certainly circumnavigate the ancient boundary before venturing into the city. The miraculous masonry dives towards the River Exe, then soars to the cap of an ancient volcano.

Yet you could easily remain unaware of the ring of history that resonates around Exeter. Unlike York, the wall here melts surreptitiously into the fabric of the place called Isca Dumnoniorum by its first residents. The Roman wall is disguised variously as a foundation for a pedestrian walkway and a supporting superstructure for sundry council car parks, the modern equivalent of the bushel under which Exeter's light is hidden.

Arrive by that elusive train to Exeter Central, though, and finding the wall is easy. Two minutes from the definitely dull station, and apparently average Queen Street,



## Exeter marks the spot

you ascend to Northenhay – and more than a millennium of history.

The "hay" component of the name is a Saxon term for an enclosure of greenery. Exeter has a handsome handful of these. Even in the dying days of February, each is flickering into life as the first spring flowers meekly emerge.

Northenhay is claimed to be the first public park in Britain, dedicated in 1612. But the term "park" does scant justice to the curvaceous, herbaceous expanse sculpted by Romans, Saxons and Normans.

Each wave of visitors has left its mark on the space – notably the

Romans, who in AD200 beefed up the wooden stockade that first protected Exeter with a formidable wall 30ft high and 10ft thick. They conjured the fortification from frozen lava lying virtually beneath their feet, where millions of years ago the gentle terrain was shattered by a mild (this Devon, after all) eruption. Now it runs like an errant contour through Northenhay.

The Crown Court now occupies the castle grounds, rendering the enclosure out-of-bounds to law-abiding visitors. But the original

monarchs; they generously named it for the king who had reinforced the stone curtain after the Danes breached it around the end of the first millennium. Nowadays, the main purpose of the rough red sandstone tower is to draw the visitor to one of the highest points in the city, from where the sheer good fortune of Exeter becomes clear. In every direction, hand-sculpted giant hills rise from the winter haze.

The Crown Court now occupies the castle grounds, rendering the enclosure out-of-bounds to law-abiding visitors. But the original

Norman gate is still in the public domain, and slams its way on to the skyline. The Norman arc above the entrance is topped by two triangle-tipped Saxon windows. Surely some structural mistake, since the Normans succeeded the Saxons? The answer seems to be that this was an early example of cowboy building.

"The Normans employed Saxon workmen to do the work," says Sara, one of the volunteer guides who usher visitors around Exeter in all weathers. "They probably finished it off in the style they were good at, while the Normans weren't looking."

An exercise in extravagant embellishment: St Peter's Cathedral, Exeter

PHOTOGRAPH: MARCH HILL/PAP

only to be deemed to be blocking the path of progress and buried unceremoniously beneath Boots the Chemist. All that remains of the wall is a crazed piece of paving on Princesshay. This "hay" is devoid of green. The said princess was Elizabeth, our present Queen, who laid the foundation for Britain's first shopping precinct in 1949. What distinguishes it from retail outrages perpetrated since then is that Princesshay at least tugs its pedestrian forelock in awe at the majesty of Exeter's cathedral.

St Peter's constitutes an exercise in extravagant embellishment. A pair of vast, square Norman towers support a Gothic nave that stretches half-way to Cornwall. Exeter's cathedral enjoyed the same ecclesiastical immunity as St Paul's in London and suffered only superficial damage in the Nazi bombing raids.

Other buildings, cower in the face of unreconstructed splendour, crowding into the High Street behind the Cathedral Close. Here, jostling with shoe shops and building societies, you find the Guildhall – picnicked wonderfully by centuries of civic worthiness, the time-stained timbers still the venue for city council. Better yet, give Queen Street a second chance. The Royal Albert Memorial Museum is the best sort of municipal folly, built with exotic stone such as Aberdeen granite, imported by the Victorians courtesy of the splendid new railway.

Before heading back to the uncertainty of the present railway age, hunt through the twirling columns of the museum for Con's Café – and a life-sustaining piece of sticky sponge as thick as a Roman wall. Unlike finding a train home, this is truly a piece of cake.

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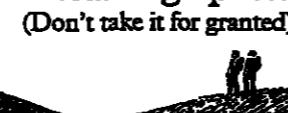
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## cornwall

# Cornish cream

**Candida Lloyd watches the world go by in Polruan – where cuteness comes with character**

**W**hen, in 1478, the King sent his sergeant-at-arms to enforce the law among wilful members of the community at Fowey estuary in south-east Cornwall, the man was dispatched back to London minus his ears. Today you can expect a friendlier welcome, particularly at the charming village of Polruan that huddles on one side of the mouth of the Fowey estuary.

The heart of the village is made up of a mass of stone cottages divided by a network of narrow streets.

Yet despite the cute looks and the consequent summer hordes of visitors, this is still very much a place with its own character. You see it at its empty best at this time of year.

An attractive harbour overlooks the estuary where a flotilla of boats is criss-crossed by container vessels laden with china clay. Opposite the village is the pretty town of Fowey, accessible by a 50p passenger ferry.

Reaching Polruan by car is not easy. A tiny vehicle ferry operates from further up the estuary; otherwise you have to take part in a 40-minute cross-country rally through the narrow back lanes. But once you fight your way through, the stresses of working life evaporate; you can put on jeans and a big jumper, and flop.

The two pubs in the village are subtly demarcated: one



Bay watch: from Polruan, left, it's a 50p ferry to Fowey

PHOTOGRAPHS: MARC HILL/APEX

has a wide range of food; the other a wide range of local characters. There are also a couple of general stores, tea shops, and a bakery offering pasties for 60p. The place seems like an updated Cornish version of *Under Milk Wood*.

A boat-building business

still operates in the harbour,

along with a scattering of

fishermen. In Polruan's heyday,

vast quantities of pilchards

were brought in to be salted

and pressed in stacks up to 6ft

high. The yards known as

"pilchard palaces", where the

stacking took place can still be

seen attached to

houses along the waterfront. An

other feature of

the village is a

14th-century stone

blockhouse, which

was linked to a

similar fort on the

opposite side of

the estuary by a

heavy chain. To

prevent pirates

and enemy ships

from entering the

port the chain was

simply yanked up.

But the best

thing about Polruan is the

water life. You can spend

hours just looking out on the

estuary, watching the river

trade.

Apart from gawping, walking

is the other reason for visiting Polruan. Follow the coast

east and you immediately step

out to some of the country's

finest cliff paths. Plunging into

deep valleys or up into rocky

outcrops, the walking can be

tough going, but the views are

always glorious.

Inland, several beautiful

paths trace the side of the est-

uary. The best known is the four-mile circular Hall Walk created by the Mohun family of Hall, who were the local bigwigs in 1585. The path was a kind of 16th-century Disney-land. Local serfs cut out the

walkway, which zigzags down

the steep hillside to the river, and planted vast numbers of trees and shrubs for the benefit of promenading ladies and gentlemen.

The walk takes you

through the centre of Fowey,

which manages to keep the

number of shops selling sailing shoes and pasties down to a bearable level, and past the home of Daphne du Maurier, many of whose novels, including *Rebecca*, were inspired by the area.

But the most sensational

walk starts at the 16th-century bridge at the hamlet of Lerryn, several miles out of Polruan. A riverside track goes down to the ancient Ethy Quay, where sail barges used to bring their wares. The tide laps into Lerryn Creek twice a day, bringing

with it the scent of the sea. The five-mile circular walk twists and turns alongside the creek and through some woodland which was recorded in the Domesday Book in 1086. The path eventually turns inland at the old river quay at St

Winnow.

At the hamlet is a church which contains a shrine to two men from St Winnow. From what must have been a simple rural lifestyle, the two local boys grew up to become Army officers and ended up fighting thousands of Zulu warriors in the battle of Rorke's Drift. After the church the track goes past a ruined mill and

Walks in the area: National Trust booklet, *Coast of Cornwall series No 21, Fowey*. Tourist office: *The Ticket Shop* (in the Post Office), 4 Custom House Hill, Fowey (01726 833616).

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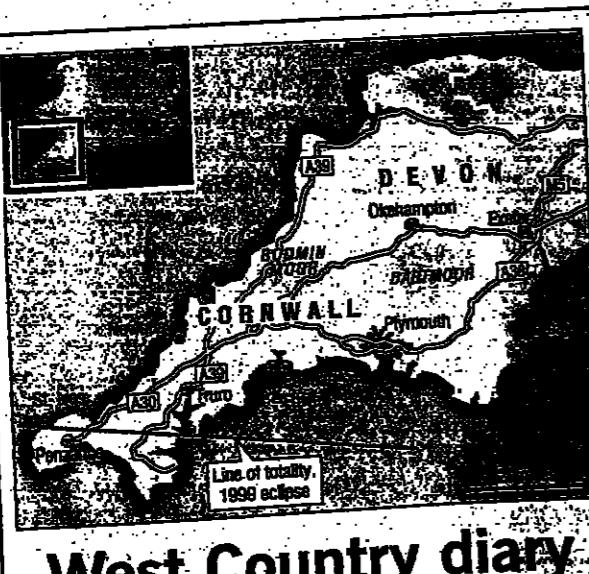
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### West Country diary

**H**oliday bookings for Cornwall in 1999 will be directly influenced by an astronomical event in Asia later this month. The total solar eclipse over Mongolia on 10 March is bound to fuel interest in the next-but-one total eclipse of the sun, visible over west Cornwall at 11.11am on 11 August, 1999. The central line of totality passes just north of Penzance and south of Falmouth (see map, above). For an excellent guide to the eclipse, complete with a viewer, send a cheque for £5.95, payable to the Royal Greenwich Observatory, to The Observatory, Madingley Road, Cambridge CB3 0EZ. Accommodation is likely to be scarce. For lists of properties, call the tourist information centres in Penzance (01736 622071; also covering St Ives), Helston (01326 565431) and Falmouth (01326 312300). If you cannot make it to Cornwall, then you will still get a good view of a partial eclipse from elsewhere in the UK. Even in Britain's northernmost town, Lerwick in Shetland, there will be a partial eclipse covering 65 per cent of the sun.

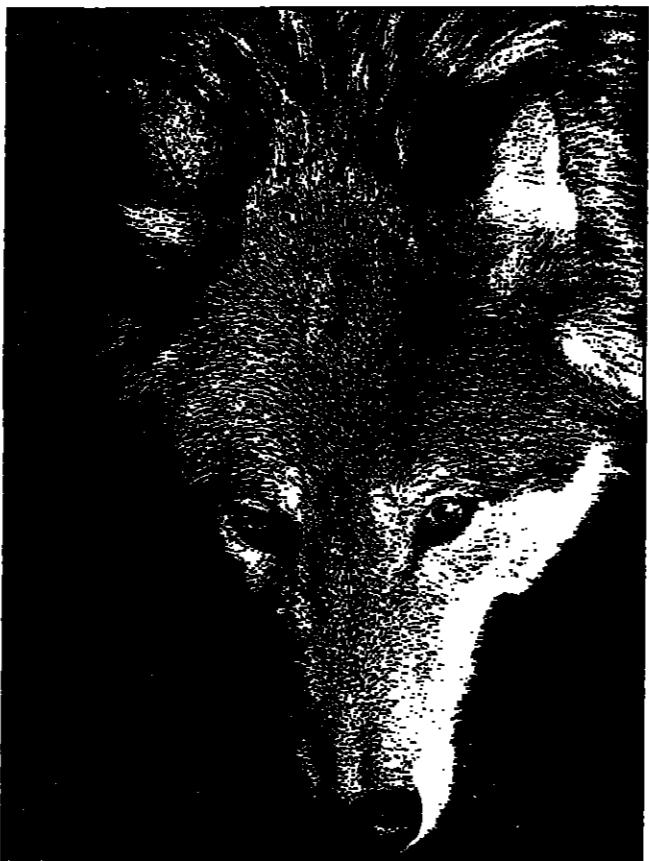
# Crying wolf in Scotland

Should we be reintroducing native species to Britain?  
Daniel Butler considers schemes with teeth – and tusks

**P**opular opposition was an insuperable problem for Dr Roger Panaman's plans to open a wolf centre at Aviemore. He had planned eventually to release the animals into the wild. After a long-running battle with locals, on 10 February he reluctantly conceded defeat. "I still believe it is perfectly possible to reintroduce wolves anywhere in the Highlands," he protests. "There is no habitat problem, it is just a political one – no one is prepared to stand up to the landowners and farmers."

Enthusiasm for bringing back animals exterminated by our ancestors is increasing. Wild boar, beavers and wolves are prime candidates, and research has been taking place in Scotland. Boar and beaver were once heavily hunted for sport, food and fur, and had probably died out by Shakespeare's day. But, although the last English wolves disappeared around the same time, a handful survived for another two centuries in Scotland and Ireland. The theory is that wolves would keep nature in balance by culling the overexpanded Scottish deer herds, boar would help forestry by controlling undergrowth, and beavers would aid habitat regeneration.

Resistance to wolves has, understandably, been pretty widespread in Scotland. A survey by *The Scotsman* last year revealed that only 17 per cent of locals wanted wolves on their doorsteps and just 36 per cent of all Scots favoured the idea. "Just because the Highlands are sparsely populated doesn't mean this is accept-



Wolves – suitable for Scotland?

PHOTOGRAPH: PLANET EARTH

able," says George Anderson of Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). "This is not the same country as it was 40, let alone 200, years ago; people who think that an animal should be reintroduced just because it once lived here seem to forget that," he says. "When people talk about bringing back wolves we simply say, 'think about it'."

The prospect of howling wolves in Scotland, however,

may pale beside the possibility of contending with wild boar. These are powerful omnivores with snouts that act as a combined ploughs and battering rams. "Just one boar can devastate an entire field of crops. They go through root crops like a Rotavator and can cause untold damage in vineyards and market gardens," says an adviser for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF).

Scientists say that accidental reintroduction would be a disaster. "Many farmed wild boar contain domestic pig genes," says a MAFF advisor. If these get out into the wild you end up with a bastardised feral pig – the worst of all possible worlds."

So if wolves and boars aren't acceptable, what about beavers? The outlook for this toothy creature is different – and there is a serious prospect of an officially backed reintroduction scheme. The preliminary research has provided promising

results. "Most people think of dams when they picture beavers, but that's the Canadian species. European beavers prefer tunnelling in the river bank," says Mairi Cooper, a vertebrate ecologist at SNH.

Tre-felling, another habit associated with the animal, also appears to be less of a problem than might be imagined. Generally, beavers feed on herbaceous vegetation, and bark damage is confined to a narrow strip of land close to the water (some studies even suggest this may have a beneficial coppicing effect). Better still, so far the idea seems popular. Polls suggest that two-thirds of Scots favour the idea, and there are few objections from farmers or foresters. The only slight hiccups have come from fishermen, worried that beaver activity might flood salmon spawning beds or block migrating fish. Research suggests that this is unlikely, however, and, as a next step, the scientists have tentatively pinpointed Norwegian beavers as those most closely related to their extinct Scottish cousins.

Further work needs to be done on possible pilot sites, but Ms Cooper says if all goes well the new millennium could see beavers swimming in Britain for the first time in four centuries.

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Drought warnings from the water companies were all we needed for the heavens to open. In the last few days we have been nearly drowned by horizontally-driven rain: fields are awash, our little river is in spate, and springs are erupting in places that have been dry for years.

The amount of water coming down has been colossal. One inch of rain dumps 22,000 gallons on every acre, and I reckon we have had 4in during the week: our smallholding of 12 acres must therefore have been bombarded by nearly 10 million pounds of water. Yet only a tiny fraction of this life-giving flood will be caught or used by man: most has already filtered away via land-drains and ditches into the river, and on down the Severn to the sea.

With the air full of talk about drought and global warming, it is easy to become obsessed about water.

Walking up our modest stream, I try to estimate the flow. How long would it take to fill a 100-gallon bath? At its present rate, only a few seconds. This minor watercourse is channeling away hundreds of thousands of gallons every day, and it is only one of hundreds

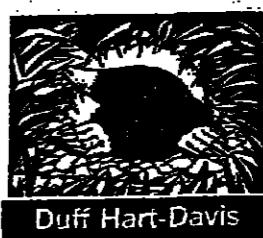
tunnelling the big river.

I find it strange that our local water company, Severn Trent, which was obliged to impose a long-running hosepipe ban in the summer of 1995, is apparently doing so little to increase storage capacity. A spokeswoman assured me blandly that its system of reservoirs, rivers and subterranean aquifers is functioning well, but that no research is being done into the possibility of shunting water from the west west to the dry east via some form of national grid.

Other bodies such as the Environment Agency and British Waterways have considered some such scheme, perhaps using canals, for annual rainfall in the west (more than 100in in Snowdonia) is four times that in the east (22in in Cambridge); but the idea is not as simple as it sounds.

One difficulty is that the acid upland water of the Severn, derived largely from the Welsh mountains, is quite different from water flowing out of chalk and limestone, and would play havoc with the ecosystem if discharged straight into the Thames.

The most promising idea is the artificial recharging of aquifers, already pioneered with success by Thames Water. Hundreds of feet under London, beneath thick bands of clay, silt and sand, an immense mass of chalk extends 50 miles to north and south. The chalk, riven by horizontal



The air is full of talk about drought and global warming, yet only a fraction of our rainfall is stored

fissures, is in effect a colossal sponge, full of water which has filtered down through the overlying strata.

For years, Thames Water has been abstracting through boreholes, but now it has begun doing the opposite: in times of plenty, such as full-dike February, it is pouring treated water back down, to replenish an underground reservoir infinitely larger than one on the surface in Britain.

I find the idea of the aquifers agreeably mysterious. Is it not extraordinary that prehistoric water, still saline, should be lying beneath Abingdon?

Another simple and effective means of conserving water has been proposed by Mark Hart, a hydraulic engineer and demolition expert based in Oxfordshire. Every house, he says, should have its own underground tank for collecting rainwater off the roof: indeed, such a tank should be a legal requirement for any new dwelling.

A pump would lift soft water to a header tank in the attic, to be used for flushing lavatories. This single innovation would cut mains consumption sharply; it would also provide a supply for hosing down cars, watering gardens and washing hair.

The farm on which I grew up in the Chilterns once depended entirely on the rainwater it could collect and store. High on the chalky hills, no ground supply was available, so five subterranean cisterns caught the runoff from the roofs of the house and its surrounding barns.

As in many crises brought on by the extravagance of modern living, there is something to be said for a return to systems that functioned perfectly well in the past.

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08

# The Primrose Hill mob

**Anna Pavord meets the men from the Garden Rescue Service**

"**G**ardeners to Babylon", it says on the front of St John Stephens' milk浮. He's proud of the milk浮. "My most famous idea in the bath tub" he says. Mr Stephens runs the Garden Rescue Service, based in Primrose Hill, north London, and the green-and-yellow float, packed with tools, plants and garden rubbish, is a familiar sight in the streets of Highgate, Islington and parts of Hackney. Sometimes it even strays as far as Notting Hill Gate or Chelsea, where outlying window-boxes get the St John service.

But why a milk浮? "It does less damage to our lungs than anything else I could think of," he replies. The pedal bikes with trailers they used previously were limited. They couldn't carry ladders, and hadn't enough flat space to ferry plants about. The float has a battery, charged up overnight, and a big, flat base for plants. "When we stop at traffic lights, people try to buy stuff off the back of the float."

A big blackboard on the wall of their office – one of the waiting-rooms at the old Primrose Hill railway station – shows what the Garden Rescue Service is up to at the moment: landscaping design, lighting, fencing, trellis, clearance, pruning. They provide plants and build planters to put them in. They make pond covers and storage bins from recycled timber. They have a little wildlife park at 3B Goodway, London NW1. They pick up

garden rubbish and deliver it to Camden's recycling centre, where it is used to feed power station. They advise on "integrated pest management" (using bugs to catch bugs) and run a small garden library for the use of their clients.

"We're not just a maintenance service," says St John firmly, tugging his forage cap even lower down over his eyes. "We like to feel we are giving these gardens back to their owners, for them to enjoy and work in as well. We help with things they can't tackle." Such as runaway wisteria, overgrown rambling roses, leaking ponds.

City gardens have their own special problems: earth that is sometimes little more than ground-up bricks and mortar, drought, shade, cats – especially cats. And no side entrances. Only 20 per cent of the gardens that St John and his two team leaders, Leo and Josh, go to have direct access. The rest of them can be reached through the house.

That means quantities of polythene sheet to cover the hall carpet, owners clutching anxiously, all rubbish packed hygienically in black plastic bin-liners. "Oh yes," says Leo, nodding his fair hair extensions (they are pulled back into a pony-tail). "We are very skilled at going through houses."

St John's "moment of epiphany", as he puts it, happened on an allotment in Scotland. He found his way through the University of East Anglia by working as a

chef, then wandered northwards, settling finally with a sister in Edinburgh. He got the allotment to grow herbs, became good at growing things, then picked up work as a jobbing gardener. But the cold drove him south again and here he is in Primrose Hill, with – he seems slightly surprised that it's so – his own business.

The typical client, he says, is aged 28-30, professional, short of time but interested in the garden. "Publishers," puts in Leo. "Yes," says St John. "Lots of publishers." And is it easy to agree with a client what needs to be done in the garden? "Oh yes," says St John. "But we don't always agree amongst ourselves,"

says Leo. "We'll happily bicker for hours" acknowledges St John. "Josh won't give house room to tubs, but he likes *bergenia*," Leo says the word with incredulity. "A healthy exchange of prejudices," explains St John.

Greenness is important to them. And recycling. As few pesticides as possible. No petrol. No landfill. But with the vague, incoherent leaning towards the organic that often affects town gardeners, it's also good business. The little wildlife park they have made at 3B Goodway in the shade of the world's first gasometers has environmentally-friendly ponds and walkways, but Garden Rescue

also sells plants and planters there. And they don't spin a web of mystery around garden design. "Look," says St John. "Design has to come from function. A London garden has to be an extension of the house. So you just have to ask people what this room is for." "Courtyard and curtain," says St John. "I begin to feel this is a mantra that has passed me by. St John explains. The courtyard is the outside, living bit, the curtain the screen of plants that protects the courtyard from being overlooked, or screens off a bad view. They are the two most important elements in any design.

PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW BUURMAN

My trip ends with a ceremonial visit to the milk浮, parked on the far side of the railway bridge. As it sits there, bug-eyed, unthreatening, with its cargo of rakes and compost, wisteria prunings and winter heathers, you realise what a clever piece of PR it represents. Leo and Josh are relieved that St John has finally decided against adding a couple of three-wheeled vehicles to the transport fleet. "Inherently unstable" is the verdict; "inherently uncool" the sub-text.

The Garden Rescue Service, 123 Regent's Park Rd, London NW1 (0171-586 7714), is open Wednesdays and Fridays.

More than a maintenance service: the rescue team (left to right) St John Stephens, Josh and Leo

"Can you tell me whether planting a wisteria in a large container, such as a half-barrel, is likely to be successful?" asks Caroline Benwell of Herne Hill, London. "I long for a wisteria draping my balcony, but my surveyor has vetoed one in the ground (subsidence, cracks, drains etc). If not a wisteria, could you suggest another climber (a vine? a hop?) that might be happy in a container for many years? I want something that will be really happy as long as it's fed, watered, and loved. I did grow a Clematis montana in a half-barrel and persuaded myself that it didn't know it was in prison, but when I eventually planted it properly, it positively exploded into growth and I feel guilty at having deprived it of freedom for so long."

My own feeling is that a wisteria is unlikely to be happy for years in a half-barrel. It is to drape Ms Benwell's balcony if has a lot of work to do, and it is difficult to imagine that a half-barrel would provide sufficient spark. But there may be



## CUTTINGS

wisterias whose loving owners can prove otherwise. If there, I'd like to hear from them.

Gardening *Which?*, asked the same question, replied that wisteria would grow in a tub, but would be stunted, though, being confined, it might come into flower more quickly than young wisterias usually do. I waited eight years for the first bloom on my *Wisteria venusta* (not in a tub).

The most successful climber I have ever seen in a container is an *Actinidia chinensis* which stretches to extraordinary lengths from a terrace at Abba jar on the roof garden of Rick Mather, the architect. It is the vine commonly called Chinese gooseberry, which in

warmer climates produces kiwi fruit. When suited, it will grow to 50ft. The leaves are handsome, dark green and heart-shaped. It's worth growing as a foliage plant alone and since Ms Benwell mentioned a vine and a hop as alternatives to the wisteria, she presumably does not mind doing without flowers. When the actinidia is established, she could grow a clematis (in a separate barrel) to scramble up through it.

The Alpine Garden Society is holding an early spring show today (12pm-4.30pm) at Mark Hall School, First Avenue, Harlow, Essex. Fritillaries, dwarf narcissus, saxifrage, wild cyclamen and primulas will be among the flowers put up for competition at this show. Admission £1.

The Royal National Rose Society will hold its annual pruning demonstrations today and tomorrow (11am-4pm) at The Gardens of the Rose, Chiswell Green, Herts. (01727 850461). Admission £4.

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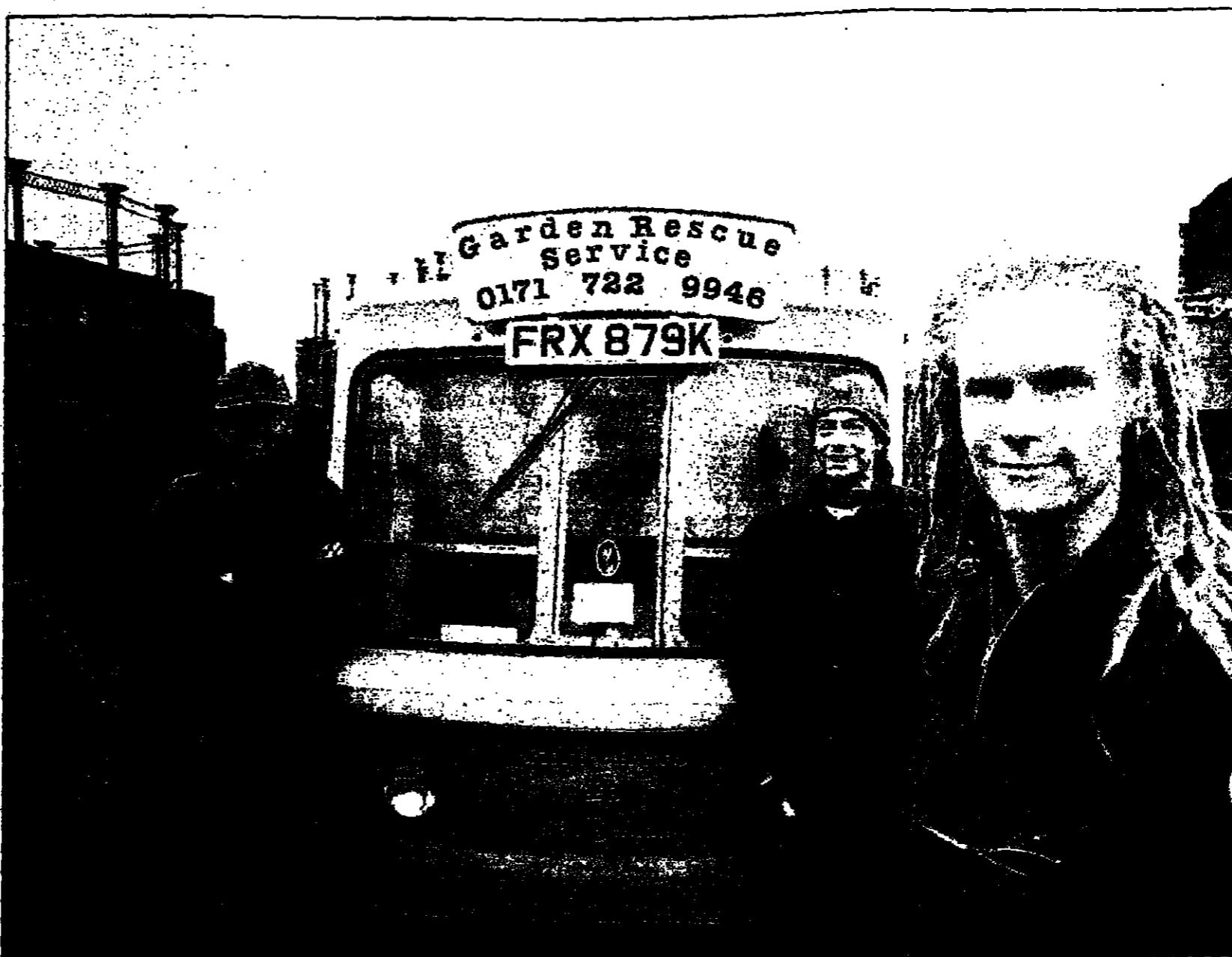
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More than a maintenance service: the rescue team (left to right) St John Stephens, Josh and Leo

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# all consuming

## Not such super markets

Getting a bargain isn't so easy, reports Debbie Davies

**E**veryone wants a bargain. The supermarkets have thousands on offer. But do we get what we bargain for? The Consumers' Association says the proliferation of price cuts, free gifts and bonus points in supermarkets today actually confuses prices and makes price comparison and shopping around more difficult. Latest figures suggest it has a point.

AC Nielsen, a market research company, says our supermarket shopping habits have changed surprisingly fast over the past two years. One-third of us used to shop around between supermarkets; now only one in four does so. Our eye has moved instead to loyalty card bonus points and in-store promotions. Two years ago less than two-thirds of us always looked out for special price offers; today, 85 per cent of us shop this way. Our interest may be in filling our trolleys with promotions from the Olympiad of special deals on display; the reality is that the proportion we buy on promotion has hardly changed. Of the shopper's trolley, Nielsen says, last year 21.8 per cent of groceries selected were on promotion compared with 21.2 per cent the previous year.

So a shopping environment that makes big promises about giving so much away free does not necessarily mean more savings for shoppers. Worse, it can cost you money.

Clive Vaughan, retail director with Verdict, a company that studies supermarkets, says that there comes a point at which more price promotion is counter-productive for shoppers. "Faced with a kaleidoscope of signs, customers can lose touch with price positioning," he says. At this point, according to the Consumers' Association's theory on confusion pricing, shoppers have no choice but to stick with a brand of retailer or product they know in the hope that the familiar can be relied on to offer the best value for money.

In practice it is easy to see how the supermarkets' torrent of promotions

and price cuts can leave you bewildered and even out of pocket. This is what happened to me when I went on a supermarket sweep in search of bargains:

- Information overload. Three items I bought registered a higher price at the check-out than that advertised on the shelf. Providing you know the correct price, stores will check your information and correct their mistake, as they did in my case, or risk falling foul of misleading price legislation. Supermarkets rely on staff to synchronise prices displayed on shelves with those charged at the check-out. This means thousands of changes in store every week: Tesco claims it offers 2,000 price promotions in addition to 600 lowest price deals; Sainsbury runs a more sedate 1,000 special promotions, but the entire offer changes every week.

With supermarkets open seven days and 24-hour opening mooted, Nick Adery, head of in-store marketing and promotion at Sainsbury, admits: "There are times when the supermarket's shelf tickets do not tally with prices charged at the check-out." Electronic shelf-edge pricing is the ultimate thermostat on promotions, allowing supermarkets to turn offers on and off, up and down, electronically, with simultaneous changes across the point-of-sale program and the shelf edge, but the cost of installation means that this may be some way away. More likely are hand-held scanners which will roam the store with you, flashing promotional messages at you as you shop.

- The missed opportunity. Common sense tells you that everyone will pick up the free product when they are buying something on the promise of "buy one, get one free" – a "dog off" as the trade calls it. In fact, manufacturers such as Bird's Eye, which run "bog-offs" on everyday grocery lines, know that between 5 and 20 per cent of shoppers will miss out on the free product, effectively paying twice what they should have for buying the single item. Like the National Lot-



The supermarkets' torrent of promotions can leave you bewildered

PHOTOGRAPH: GERRANT LEWIS

tery's unclaimed millions, every supermarket must have its stack of unclaimed freebies. It would be simple to rectify: "Buy one, get one free" offers could be banded together, or the supermarket point-of-sale terminals could be programmed to relay a message at the check-out that the customer is entitled to a free item, rather than the current system which comes into play to deduct the second item only when the customer takes it. I missed out on free hot cross buns, frozen vegetables and cheesecake, all on "buy one, get one free" promotion, because I did not see the signs or was not reading the promotional messages carefully enough. And don't expect staff at the check-out to tip you off. Even when I tried buying some of the most heavily promoted "three for two" offers, no one told me that when you buy two you can take another pack for free.

- In the dark. Supermarkets are selective about how they advertise deals and special prices around the

store. Confectionery promotions, such as Tesco's current promotion on Lindt chocolate, which allows you to buy one and get another at half price, would seem highly relevant at the kiosk you typically find at the entrance to supermarkets. Here, purchases are very often confectionery. In fact, Tesco makes no mention of the promotion at its kiosks, although it displays Lindt here along with other confectionery. You need to be shopping in the meat department before you come across the promotional message. So the shopper who is already likely to buy confectionery buys unaware of his entitlement to another bar at half the price, while the promotion tempts those buying meat to add chocolate to their trolley. I was caught out with a soap powder promotion. Following the "buy one, get one half price" sign, I chose the powder next to the sign, checking the size of pack I needed to buy – 3kg – with the promotion message. In fact, the promotion was on an-

other brand of powder, so I paid full price for my 6 kg of soap powder.

The dunder 200 extra points on your loyalty card when you buy two packs of Typhoo 160 tea bags at £2.99 per pack is a far speedier way to earn rebates than adding points at the usual rate of five for every £5 spent. This offer featured in Sainsbury's Reward Card promotion last month but it appeared less attractive when I compared the price I paid for tea. Instead of £5.98, I could have paid £2.68 for two packs of Waitrose 160 tea bags. Yes, paying £3.30 more for two packs of Typhoo gained an extra 200 points, or £2 voucher, as well as it was foil-wrapped, round tea bags with tea of specified origin that I wanted. Waitrose fitted the bill just as well as Typhoo.

This bunch of promotions added more than £6 to my bill, against which I can set savings. I have just about managed to break even. My natural appetite for promotions is not quite as strong as it once was.

### Under the Counter

Dirty weekends? I'd rather stay at home

I was made to go to the country last weekend.

Getting away from it all sounds heavenly, but in reality I don't want to get away from it all. I like it all.

In order to make this rustic

sojourn as brief as possible, I

spent Friday night in town

and dosed up on the synthetic

pleasures of metropolitan life,

trying to block out the

manure and cider that was

waiting at the end of the

motorway. Saturday morning

involved lugging heaps of

unflattering outerwear to the

car, as our hosts were bound

to make us go for cold, damp

walks round their muddy

land, to admire their yawning

efficient fences and

incredibly dull ditches.

On arrival, down on the

farm, initial depression set in

as I had to gird my loins and

protect my soft Italian handbag

from the eight dogs and

the charging geese. Our

hostess (seven months pregnant

with twins) was wearing

a never-washed hairy sweater

and stirring a pot of something

brown and steaming on the

Agfa. After we had patted

her, tummy and congratulated

him on his amazingly

powerful testicles, there

came an immense lift to my

country blues – they poured us

huge G&Ts and switched on

Blind Date.

Then it was time for dinner.

As I lifted a forkful of

duck, a hearty shout came

from the kitchen: "Watch out

for the shot!" Thank God I

didn't crunch on one of these

mini ballbearings, as I've just

spent more money on a filling

than I did on a new tumble

drier. My husband, however,

hit the jackpot, and was spitting

out shot all evening. I

had been hoping that kneading

had not come into our

hostess's culinary preparations,

but dessert was homemade

apple pie. I won't have to

take any Yakult for a while,

as she could have

grown mustard and cress in

those palms.

Of the country pursuits I

might have dredged, Sunday

morning's activity hadn't

even crossed my mind – a

7.30am start to take fifty cut

little lambs to the slaughter.

We hadn't even had break-

fast! On arrival at the abattoir,

we were greeted by a

grim-faced ewe with rigor

morts, who had come down

from Scotland, but obviously

didn't travel well. I tried not

to think of the talking sheep in

*Babe*, and hoped it would

be beef for lunch.

Our host's idea of a pre-

prandial was to make us

muck out the cartie, then

give them bales of stinking

silage (which the poor cows

actually eat). At least I was

semi-prepared for this, and

had dosed my polo-neck

with Giorgio, so was able to

smother myself every time a

bae arrived.

It was beef. In fact it was

"Flossie" for lunch. But we

were only eating her because

she had no reproductive

organs, so there was no point

in keeping her. Yum, yum –

pass the horseradish.

Never again will I be

tricked with promises of

bucco bliss. It's all about

dung and death in the

country. I can create my own rural

idyll at home – safely within

the boundaries of the M25.

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# Tales of men's shirts

**Don't pay the most for the best.**  
By Andy Zneimer

It is safe to say that London is internationally acknowledged to be the world's premier shirt capital. With one or two exceptions, such as Charvet in Paris, all the great shirtmakers are based here and it is to the British capital that connoisseurs flock to purchase the ultimate status symbol in shirts. For over 100 years, Jermyn Street, SW1 – and its environs – has been the place for bespoke and off-the-peg shirt tailoring, and it will probably remain so until shirts go out of fashion.

Yet the fact remains that whilst anybody in their right mind would enjoy the pure luxury factor of a shirt fit for a king, not everybody can afford to make a regular trip to SW1. And that's why man in his infinite wisdom created the high street. Certainly, the true shirt scenario would not be complete without a mention of the increasingly competitive standards to be found there too.

Marks & Spencer, for instance, sells its comprehensive range of traditional City shirts at £32.50. If you're looking for a comfortable shirt that's fabulous value for money and practically a classic, you need look no further. They come with double cuffs and you can opt for stripes, checks or solids in 100 per cent cotton. Alternatively, the M&S superfine range of men's shirts retails at £27 and is available with either single or double cuffs with classic or cut-away collar. One interesting feature of this shirt is its differentiated tail length – the back being longer than the front. The senior selector for men's shirts, Gary Toyne, reports that "this season is all about colour". The shelves certainly make a visual feast, with emerald green, azure blue and red catching the eye.

C&A's latest shirt offering is in non-iron technology. The top 33 stores will be stocking these quality superfine cottons from European fabric mills in both solid and yarn-dyed patterns from March, retailing at £20 each. There are three other shirt ranges from C&A at £5, £12 and £17 each, the price depending mainly on the fabrics employed. These offer highly functional shirts, which handle cleanly and crisply and are eminently wearable for business or formal occasions.

However, if money is no object, and should you be looking to invest in a garment of the very finest quality, painstakingly constructed to last and made to measure to fit that unique shape that is you, there is really only a limited number of "off high-street" establishments to visit:

Peter Whisbrey has been with New & Lingwood of SW1 for some 20 years. "We have a shop at 'the school,'" he says – Eton, that is – "which sells everything for the boys, including stockings. The old boys come here when they leave."

The New & Lingwood bespoke twofold cotton poplin shirt will set you back £125, but is truly a hand-crafted work of art. (Off-the-peg shirts retail for between £75 and £79, accounting for roughly 75 per cent of sales). The term "twofold" means that two yarns are twisted together, lending additional strength and elasticity without adding bulk. There is a minimum order of four hand-cut shirts, which is common practice. Dukes and earls can have coronets hand-embroidered for a noble £30.

There are pattern books that contain around 1,000 designs, with many classic stripes and checks, fabrics that include sumptuous Sea Island cotton quality, costly crépe silk (you can pay up to £260), collars of every conceivable shape and a surprising range of colours. The current trend, Mr Whisbrey informs me mercifully, is for very conservative bengals and fine bengals (stripes), but for the spring somewhat "fancier" stripes will be on offer, and customers should look out for the brighter solids.

Twice a year, in March and October, the gentlemen of New & Lingwood head west to measure and fit small, medium, large and sometimes huge clients in New York, Washington and Boston. The shirts arrive a little later by courier, in return for a princely sum.

Hilditch & Key was established in London in 1899, with a branch in the rue de Rivoli, Paris, opening in 1925. With its own factory in Glenrothes, north of Edinburgh, Hilditch and Key received a Queen's Award for Export Achievement in 1995.

The list of "key-customers" makes for interesting reading: it includes the Dukes of Marlborough and Kent, Ronnie Corbett, Jeremy Paxman and Mel Brooks, as well as a number of the crowned heads of Europe and a liberal smattering of government ministers. It is well known that all the shirts worn by Karl Lagerfeld and Chanel models on the catwalks are from Hilditch & Key.

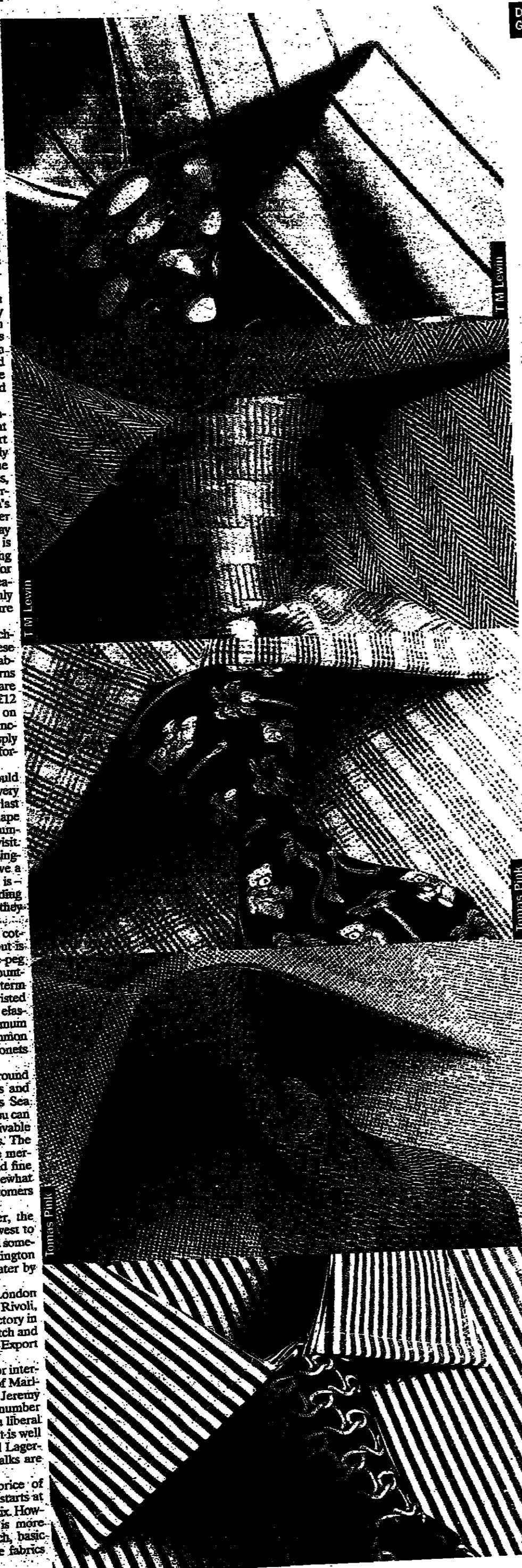
Not surprisingly, therefore, the price of bespoke twofold cotton poplin starts at £125, and there is a minimum order of six. However, the superb off-the-peg range is more affordable, with plains at £59.95 each, basic stripes at £65 and the more exclusive fabrics weighing in at £69.95 per shirt.

"Our shirts are simply the best money can buy," says the chairman, Michael Boöd. His tip for spring/summer is for plains in strong colours, with lilac as the leading contender.

Harvie & Hudson, at 77 Jermyn Street, prefers not to reveal its client list. There's little to choose between them all, but perhaps this is the most conservative shirt shop of all. The business is run by the sons and grandsons of the original TG Harvie and G.F. Hudson.

"There is a feeling at present for bright solids," states J.W. Harvie. Prices of made-to-measure shirts begin at £115 for single cuffs and £145 for double, with off-the-peg shirts costing £95. There are seven basic collar types, but should these not suffice, no shape is too much of a challenge.

Simon Hobbs, a salesman at Turnbull & Asser (by appointment to the Prince of Wales), informs me that clients sometimes request "the most amazing and embarrassing shirts". He will not be cajoled into revealing any examples, but



and start at £135 (minimum order, three), with off-the-peg costing not much less.

However, if you're just starting out in life, and need to look the part without spending quite as much cash, fear not. There are plenty of high quality and affordable off-the-peg shirts out there that won't get you hot under the collar. The two key labels of repute to check them all, Zendeline. A Turnbull & Asser shirt is certainly not a fashion item – it all began in 1885, you see. They tend to be extremely practical garments.

The final bespoke tailor to look out for is Oswald Boateng, 9 Vigo Street, W1; but compared to the others he is from another planet, being positively funky. He says that "spring/summer '97 is the time for a bit of adventure. The theme of the collection is *Mission Impossible* and my favourite look for the season is a sharply tailored suit with a shirt and tie, all in silver." What would the original Mr Harvie have made of all that? Boateng bespoke shirts

start at £135 (minimum order, three), with off-the-peg costing not much less.

T.M. Lewin will be 100 years old next year. There is something to be said for having made your own shirts for that long, and the company has a factory in Southend that continues the tradition admirably. Prices start at £47.50 for a cotton poplin shirt, with the new Lewin collection, tailored from the very highest quality fabrics and weaves, at £55 per shirt. Lewin shirts are known for their durability and comfort. They have a distinctly generous cut, a split back yoke, a long tail and double-stitched seams, and are available with the option of double or button cuffs. Removable collar stiffeners come as standard. Uniquely, T.M. Lewin offers four sleeve lengths and four collar sizes, with the full range of patterns and plains you would expect to find plus some surprises. In addition, the company has a flourishing mail order business. Once again, superlatives are in order.

## Ad Watch

### The emotional charge of a mushy pea

If you thought mushy peas were safely banished to a dim memory of school dinners, think again. Like burgers and mash and shepherd's pie, mushy peas are on the menus of some of London's smartest eateries – courtesy of Gary Rhodes, among others. In an attempt to cash in, Batchelors has launched its first national advertising campaign for tinned mushy peas.



many UK consumers, especially higher income groups.

Mushy peas certainly polarise opinion. "They remind me of my childhood – they taste comforting," says Anna Jones, a midlander seen shopping in Tesco this week. "Which is exactly why I'd never eat them again," grimaces her friend, Margaret Hunter, a southerner born and bred.

"People either love them, or hate them," Bennison concedes. However, she believes the product – now known by the Batchelors' marketing team as 'Yorkshire caviar' – can bridge this gulf. Shoppers associate certain emotional values with the product, even if they no longer eat it, she claims. "People see it as 'eccentric' yet 'honest'."



Most people have eaten mushy peas at some time. The point is to get them to try eating them again.

No direct competitor challenges Batchelors' market dominance, but own-label mushy peas are a constant threat. Batchelors, however, has a secret weapon. Step forward the super-plump 'Bunting pea'. It may be an uphill struggle against prejudice, but in a market long characterised by slimmer peas, tough tactics are required. "We use the term 'voluptuous,'" Bennison explains. "It's all part of an attempt to turn the market on its head and say: 'big is good'."

Meg Carter

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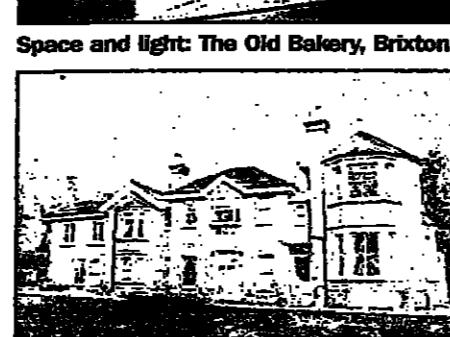
## Three of the best apartments

Bar Lodge, a late-Victorian house divided into three apartments, is perched above the Bar at the entrance to Salcombe Harbour in Devon. The property has spectacular views of the open sea and across National Trust coastline. The upper apartment has four bedrooms, with two balconies and a sun terrace. Residents have access to a private beach. £275,000 through Marchand Petit (01548 857588).

The Old Bakery in Brixton Hill, London SW2 is an unusual warehouse apartment converted by the owner, a property developer. Instead of carving up the 3,252 square feet into flats, he's created an enormous two-bedroom apartment.

The 42ft by 36ft sitting room has a vaulted ceiling and exposed beams and brickwork, and leads to a custom-built kitchen. The main bedroom is equally roomy, at more than 36ft by 19ft, and the guest bedroom is a generous 15ft by 17ft. £375,000 through Friend & Falcke (0171-498 0736).

Flat 5 in Little Walden Hall, near Saffron Walden in Essex, is on the first floor of a Victorian country house. The one-bedroom flat has a fitted chandelier in the drawing room, elaborately carved doors leading to a study, and an 18ft kitchen. Garages are in the courtyard and there is a communal summerhouse. No ground rent is payable, but the annual maintenance charge is currently around £1,200. Price £120,000 through Bruce Munro (01799 522638).



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## Read the fine print, then read it again

Stella Bingham negotiates the minefield that is buying a leasehold flat

**M**any buyers contend that it would be easier to purchase a country mansion set in rolling parkland with a home farm, fishing rights and staff cottages than to buy a leasehold flat. No one should tackle the pitfalls of leasehold property combined with the perils of shared living under the same roof without doing their homework.

The biggest stumbling-block is, invariably, the lease. Always go through this minutely before committing yourself. The lease, of course, sets out everything you can and cannot do in your own home – from subletting, to how often you have to clean your windows. Check that your share of the service charge bill is fair. Look at the ground rent provisions. They may go sky high if they are subject to regular review.

"Leases are weird and wonderful things and they depend on where you are," says Howard Elston, of Strutt & Parker. "Get a local specialist conveyancing solicitor to go through a copy of the lease. He knows the quirks and can be more relaxed about them. For instance, the leases for several estates in South Kensington say that residents aren't allowed to keep pets but, in fact, the landlords turn a blind eye."

If you need a mortgage, lenders will generally ask for the lease to run for at least 30 years after the loan has been repaid. But lease length is not as crucial as it used to be. The 1993 Leasehold Act gave most tenants the right to buy lease extensions of up to 99 years. If the years left do not look good, try to get the seller to take up his option to extend before you buy.

When Mark Davies, a banker, offered £129,000 through Foxtons for the 51-year lease on his large studio flat in South Kensington, it was in the mistaken belief that the vendor had already negotiated a 54-year extension. "When we discovered what had happened, the price fell by £15,000, the sum the lease extension will cost me."

In many buildings, leaseholders have formed their own company to buy the freehold. "This means you have more control over your own destiny and the building should be cheaper to run," says Joshua Grinling, of Winkworth.

But paying too little can be dangerous. "Sellers often say to me that they are paying only £200 a year in service charges," says Peter Rollings, of Foxtons. "That would frighten the life out of me. On flats priced between £150,000 and £250,000 I'd prefer to see

charges of about £1,000 a year. That allows for a sinking fund and shows that someone is thinking about the future. Charges that seem high but include heating and hot water could be good value."

"With purpose-built blocks you have solid floors and good sound insulation, and the ceilings won't reduce as you go higher up," says Peter Rollings.

"Older blocks need more upkeep, says Tony Halstead, a property consultant. "You may have to pay for a new roof, scaffolding, insurance or a new lift." And individual flat owners will have less say in how a large block is run.

Think about light, noise and security as well as resale potential when deciding which floor to live on. A top-floor flat may have wonderful views, but without a lift it could be hard to sell.

The amount of light is very important to me," says Mark Davies, who, nonetheless, chose a basement flat. "My flat has french doors opening onto a patio; it doesn't look out on to the street, so you are not always looking at people's ankles; and, most important, the living-room roof is all frosted glass."

In theory, a flat offers the double security of the main front door and the flat's front door, but basement and ground-floor flats are vulnerable. Check how security-conscious the neighbours are.

Yet, as Joshua Grinling says, "If you really want to be in charge of your destiny, buy a freehold house."

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**A**nyone who has spent any time listening to stockbrokers in their pomp will know all about the old adage that bull markets "climb a wall of worry".

What it means is that there are always reasons to be anxious about the current level of share prices if you want to find them – and the higher the market goes during a bull market, the more serious those worries seem to become.

The successful trader, so your friendly broker will tell you, must be bold and blithé enough to ignore the warning voices that will inevitably accompany any protracted surge in the stock market – else he will miss the best part of the fun.

Like most things that old hands say about the stock market, this always seems better advice in hindsight – when you know what subsequently happened – than it does at the time.

Of course, it seems obvious now that the Mexican debt crisis in August 1982 marked the start of the current 15-year bull market in shares; it just didn't seem that way at the time.



## The worriers are at it again. Maybe we should take them seriously

Likewise, any old fool can see that the 1987 crash was just a blip in the long upward march of Wall Street.

We know now that it was merely an ordinary correction to a clearly overvalued market which unexpectedly spiralled out of control thanks to a previously untested invention called portfolio insurance.

This was the technique, you will recall, invented by some American computer boffins which allowed computers to run portfolios for institutions and ordered them to sell whenever shares fell more than a certain percentage.

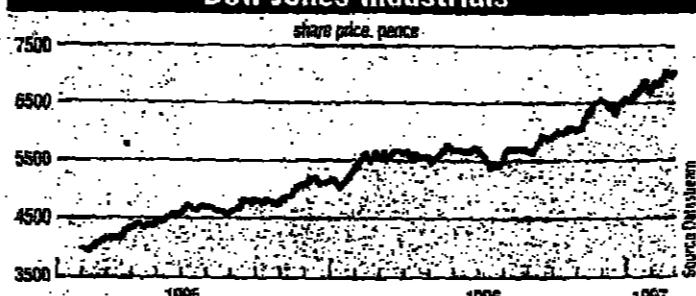
Now it does not take a genius to

discover it had a serious bug – once the market's fall had reached a certain point, the system merely became a recipe for *auto da fé*, with each wave of selling automatically creating more orders to sell.

At the time, however, most people worried that the crash was a portent of some far more serious economic setback – and for some countries, including Britain, where inflation was starting to take off after the Lawson boom, those concerns were not entirely misplaced.

On almost any historical valuation criterion, we have entered unprecedented territory. And since the voices now include Alan

### Dow Jones Industrials



Greenspan, the chairman of the Federal Reserve, the man whose decisions can do most to stop the markets in its tracks, it is no longer simply enough merely to scoff at the worriers' concerns.

This week Mr Greenspan, giving his half-yearly account of the state of the economy to Congress, repeated his concerns about the current bull market.

He repeated his warning that the stock market was showing signs of "irrational exuberance" and suggested that higher interest rates could be needed soon to stop a resurgence of inflation. There

can be no doubt that the world's

most powerful central banker was going out of his way to try to dampen Wall Street's continued buoyancy.

As the market took little notice of Mr Greenspan's hint last time, why should it pay any attention now? Well, one reason is that it usually takes actions, not words, to stop a genuinely rampant bull market.

As long as Mr Greenspan goes on talking about the need for interest rate rises, but refrains from actually making them, some investors may be tempted to go on calling his bluff.

That in a way is precisely how the irrationality which the Fed chairman was warning about manifests itself.

But Mr Greenspan's problem is that he knows – and admitted again this week – that the US economy is in remarkably good shape.

Do you believe that? If you do, then this is your kind of stock market. I know that I don't – and it is clear that Mr Greenspan does not either.

History, he said, is full of "new eras" that turned out to be mirages. The four most dangerous words in investment, as another old market adage goes, are "this time it is different". It never is.

## Where do I find good advice?

Rachel Fixsen has a few suggestions

**T**here are around 28,000 financial products on the market. Which one do you want? More importantly, which one do you really need?

We can always do our own research to get at the facts, of course. It may require a long sabbatical – and a lot of background reading. Interested? Let's face it, most of us have better things to do.

For comprehensive planning, financial advisers can help negotiate the minefield. They have the resources and expertise to know which products are around and, for those that are independent, have a legal requirement to recommend the most suitable product for you.

The problem is that all too often choosing the right adviser can seem even more daunting than picking one's way through the financial maze itself.

There is a range of choices:

- A tied agent who could be a representative of a bank or insurer, can only sell you products from one company.

- An independent adviser (IFA) can offer you a product from any company. They must have professional qualifications and are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority (PIA).

- Financial planners are good



If you need a complete review of your financial circumstances.

Solicitors and accountants may also be authorised to give financial advice.

How do you find a reputable adviser who is not going to sell you ostriches? Garry Heath, chairman of the IFA Association, a trade body for financial advisers, recommends talking to your friends.

"There are 9 million clients of IFAs out there," he says.

If you cannot get a personal recommendation the following phone services will help you track one down:

IFA Promotion, on 0117 971 1177 gives you addresses of three IFAs in your area.

Money Management magazine has a list of fee-based advisers. (Call 0117 976 9444 for list of six nearest to you.)

If your financial affairs are complex or you have a high net worth, the Institute of Financial Planning has a register of members available by calling 0137 930 4434.

The Solicitors for Independent Financial Advice helpline on 01372 721172.

It pays to make some checks before parting with money. A financial adviser must be

authorised by his or her relevant watchdog. For IFAs this is the PIA; for solicitors it is the Law Society and for accountants it is the Institute of Chartered Accountants. You can call these organisations or the Securities and Investments Board, the overall regulator, on 0171 929 3652 to make sure your adviser is bona fide.

How qualified is the adviser? By the end of June, all advisers must have a benchmark qualification. This is usually the Financial Planning Certificate (FPC), set at three levels. The exams are set and marked by the Chartered Insurance Institute (CII). A range of alternative qualifications are allowed. If in doubt, contact the PIA on 0171 538 8860.

Qualifications are a useful way of telling what the overall knowledge is of the adviser concerned. But they do not convey the IFA's ability to put that knowledge to use in a creative way on your behalf.

Many lone IFAs and firms have the backing of a large IFA network, which helps them with research into products and helps with compliance issues.

However, simply belonging to one of these networks is no guarantee. It pays to make some checks before parting with money. A financial adviser must be

Amanda Davidson, a partner at Holden Meehan, a London firm of IFAs, suggests asking plenty of questions at the first meeting. How long has the firm been in business? Is it qualified? Does it have areas of specialism? If the adviser is a sole trader, is there any back-up? Ask them to give you two clients as referees.

Be prepared to walk away. "You may just not feel comfortable with them, and want to move on," she adds.

One potentially embarrassing question concerns the adviser's remuneration. Given that the whole purpose of going to an IFA is to talk about money, this is not a sensible approach. Essentially, advisers are paid either on a straightforward fee system or they earn commission.

Financial advisers must now tell you the commission they would earn from that sale. This is so clients do not feel the advice is biased either way.

IFAs working on a fee-only basis might charge £100-£150 an hour in central London and £50-£100 in the provinces. One can usually agree a complete fee in advance. They will then rebate any commission back to you.

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SCOTTISH WIDOWS



# It's different for women

**T**ake two adults – one male, one female. They are the same age, have the same jobs and identical lifestyles. Their financial planning needs are the same, aren't they?

In fact, the opposite is true. Women find themselves paying more, or less, than men across a wide range of finance products.

In effect, the same potential outcomes – financial security when ill, a decent retirement income, even car insurance – require different inputs from women.

These differentials are set to continue, despite changes in the law, such as this week's planned government reforms entitling divorced people, usually women, to a share in their partners' pensions when a marriage ends.

Take permanent health insurance, an income payable when a person is unable to return to work after lengthy illness. Holden Meahan, a firm of independent financial advisers in London, says cover worth £20,000 a year for a woman aged 30, in a low-risk occupation, would cost £33.76 a month. By contrast, a male of the same age would pay only £18.60 a month. At age 35, women pay £42.18, compared to just £22.98 for men.

Amanda Davidson, a partner at Holden Meahan, explains women's higher claims experience: "It is tough being a woman. I suspect the pressures of modern living, where a woman has so many roles to play, mean more stress on body and soul, and hence more 'claims'. Women are also more complicated physically than men, so there is more to go wrong."

The differential is reversed in the case of critical illness cover, a different type of

Nic Cicutti discovers why financial security usually costs them more

insurance where a lump sum is paid out when sudden illnesses strike, such as heart attacks and strokes or cancer being diagnosed. John Joseph, a London financial adviser specialising in this field, says cover of £100,000 for a woman aged 45 might cost £42.60 a month. However a man might expect to pay £55.70.

This variation increases with age: women aged 55 pay £95.50 a month compared with £128.40 for men. By contrast, at age 30, the differential favours men: if anything, £14.20 compared to £15.70 for women.

Mr Joseph says: "Typically, with this type of contract women have had higher rates of cancer than men but they did not appear to suffer from coronary or respiratory diseases, which meant they paid less."

"But this is changing as underwriters obtain more up-to-date claims experience and it is likely that women will have to pay more."

Private medical insurance is an exception – for now. Bupa, the largest provider, does not differentiate between men and women but on the basis of age. A person of either sex aged 30 would expect to pay £23.68 a month for Bupa's more basic type of cover. But John Castagna, Bupa head of product development, warns the company is reviewing this policy following competition from providers which charge gender-based premiums.

With life insurance, the straightforward type of cover which pays out in the event of death, the picture is the same. Prudential, the giant UK insurer, would charge a 30-year-old woman £19 a month for cover worth £100,000. A man would pay £21. Ten years later, however, the man would pay £42, with the woman charged just £28 a month.

Norman Turner, head of financial planning at Prudential, says: "Although mortality rates have improved for men and women, the differential in terms of how much longer women live has tended to remain the same."

Women's longevity relative to men also has a big effect on their retirement income. But here, social factors also play an important role. The fact that women live longer means that when they retire, their pension is less than a male's at the same age. Figures from the Annuity Bureau, the retirement income specialist in London, show that a male smoker aged 60 would expect to receive an income worth £7,936 for a £75,000 lump sum. A female smoker would receive only £7,060.

Peter Quinton, who runs the Annuity Bureau, says: "In general, companies will pay a similar amount to men and women. Because women live longer, they can offset many of the financial handicaps they are likely to face."

Relief may come in the form of lower car insurance premiums. Premium Search, a telephone insurer, says a 30-year old London teacher driving a Vauxhall Cavalier would only pay £293 in premiums, compared to £302 for her male opposite number. The company says men tend to have fewer accidents than women but the cost of their claims tends to be higher.

Horse Financial Services, part of Lloyds Bank, a woman aged 35 would expect to pay about £180 a month to receive a pension worth £10,000 at 65. By contrast, a man would pay £160.

Clearly advance planning is critical in this area. Yet research by Fleming, the fund manager, shows 53 per cent of women will face a sharp drop in income when they retire, against 40 per cent of men. An important contributor to poor pensions is not just lower pay, but career breaks. A woman who takes five years off might receive a pension worth at least 15 per cent less than someone who remains in work.

Women also have to pay out more when it comes to meeting the cost of long-term care (LTC). Sandy Johnstone, who heads a unit specialising in LTC products for Commercial Union, says a woman aged 65 would expect to pay £67.60 a month to insure for cover worth £10,000 a year. A man pays £52.80.

Roddy Kohn, a financial adviser at Kohn Cougar, a Bristol firm, says: "The bottom line is that women must begin planning earlier and in more detail than men. The good news is that if they do, they can offset many of the financial handicaps they are likely to face."

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## The sex gap: how men and women compare

	Men
£293	£302
£33.76pm	£18.60pm
£42.60pm	£55.70pm
same	same
£28pm	£42pm
£7,060pa	£7,936pa
£160pm	£160pm
£67.60pm	£52.80pm

Age 30 unless otherwise stated. See text for sources and policy and provider details.



## LOOSE CHANGE

London & County Mortgages, the mortgage broker, is linking with National Counties Building Society to launch a five-year fixed-rate loan at 7.39 per cent. Call 0800 373300.

Gartmore is extending the no-charge offer on its Global PEP until 31 May. The fund also operates no exit, switching or withdrawal charges on its portfolio. Call 0800 289336.

Chase de Vere is launching

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a three-year fixed mortgage, charging 6.60 per cent until March 2000. A lender's fee of £95 applies. The redemption penalty is three months' interest for three years. Call 0800 747374.

Birmingham Midshires is relaunching its five-year fixed-interest Retirement Bond, paying monthly interest of 7.1 per cent gross. Call 0500 070707.

Abbey National has launched a Premium Reward Bond, offering up to 6.8 per cent gross. The bond has a minimum 12-month term. Call 0800 100801.

Albany Life is launching a Guaranteed Equity Bond, offering capital guarantees plus the chance to share in gains recorded by the FTSE 100 share index. Call 01707 669000.

Skandia Life is launching an umbrella PEP which allows the option of investing in a range of different fund managers' unit trusts. Call 0800 243509.

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# Christians out of the lions' den

Financial adviser Amanda Davidson finds solutions for a family with three teenagers to educate

**NAMES:** John and Angie Beresford  
**AGE:** Mid-40s

**OCCUPATIONS:** Electrical engineer and special needs teacher

**BACKGROUND:** John and Angie have three teenage daughters aged 13, 15 and 17. He earns £32,000 and she earns £23,000. Angie is about to change job and there will be a change to her pension scheme. As there is no "transfer club" she is wondering what to do with her current pension arrangements in the Teachers' Pension Scheme and also what contributions she should pay in future.

John has a money purchase arrangement with his current

firm and a pension transferred from his previous employment into Norwich Union.

They shortly will be receiving a lump sum of £25,000 from a maturing endowment policy. After paying off the loans and carrying out work on the property, they will be left with £15,000. Their main priority is to see that their children should have the opportunity to go to university.

They have a small amount of their investments in ethical funds. As practising Christians this is a consideration for their future investments.

**THE ADVISER:** Amanda Davidson, a partner at Holden Meahan, independent financial advisers in London.

**THE ADVICE:** Until John and Angie have decided what to do with their investment, they should put it into a building society account. This should be a postal account such as that operated by Cheltenham and Gloucester in their direct 30 account which will give a gross interest rate of 5.9 per cent or the Chelsea Post-tel 20-day account, giving 6.05 per cent gross.

The building society money should be held in Angie's name as she is a basic rate taxpayer. They should definitely pay off two personal loans now. Their main priority is to see that their children should have the opportunity to go to university.

John has a PEP with Friends Provident which contains some ethical investment. They should check

that there are no early repayment penalties.

To provide their daughters with £3,000 a year in real terms for three years of university education each, they will need roughly £9,000 for their eldest daughter. The second daughter will require the remaining £6,000 plus £50 a month savings and the youngest will require £150 a month saved between now and when she first starts at university. Thus the Beresfords should be looking at investing the full £15,000 for their daughters' education, plus the £200 a month they can now save.

John has a PEP with Friends Provident which contains some ethical investment. He could



The Beresford family: Providing for university costs proved an important consideration

PHOTOGRAPH: NEWS TEAM

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## Emerging markets no longer offer a quick buck



Brian Tora

It put me in mind of the fact that emerging markets remain an exciting prospecting ground. Africa is not necessarily the best starting point, though.

While rich in natural resources, it lacks the dynamism of, say, the Far East. Political instability, famine and conflict all combine to deliver an uncertain outlook, while corruption is a continuing worry for international investment managers.

The reality is that it is becoming more and more difficult to find bargains in emerging markets. The guarantee of a swift profit no longer exists. Investing bankers have been putting more and more resources into this field, so competition has intensified massively, driving up prices and diminishing returns.

Much of the focus of attention presently has been in the old Communist bloc countries. The amount of direct investment by foreign institutions has been rocketing, with much of the money coming from western Europe and, in particular, Germany.

In 1995, for example, the last year for which definitive statistics are available, the amount of money invested into Poland from abroad rose by 107 per cent over the previous year, making it the second-largest recipient of foreign investment after Hungary. Of course, we are not just talking about stock market investment.

Still, it goes to show that there is now enough money washing around these newly capitalised countries to make investors more cautious.

One of the earliest players in the emerging markets game was Templeton, where the dome-headed Dr Mark Mobius swiftly gained a reputation as a guru in the business of investing where no conventional investor had ventured before.

At one stage the Templeton Emerging Markets Investment Trust stood at an 18 per cent premium over net asset value - surely a record for a conventional trust.

As the bars of Ulan Bator and Sao Paulo have become crowded with alert, eager, lightweight-suited MBAs seeking to set up joint ventures, buy

assets, or simply grab a piece of the action, so it has become difficult to stick to the very tight criteria the good doctor adopted, which limited his risk.

Templeton remains an important and respected manager of emerging markets' assets, but the choice to the investor is now much wider with many highly regarded names offering funds.

It is not a one-way street, as any Albanian will tell you, but the abandonment of controlled economies and the liberalisation of trade and capital markets is throwing up opportunities not seen since the Industrial Revolution and the massive expansion of European commerce into Africa and the Far East last century.

Anyone with a bit of money to burn need look no further than a soundly managed emerging markets trust with a record - though few will have one that goes back further than Templeton's.

*Brian Tora is chairman of the investment strategy committee at Greig Middleton.*

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# Income and growth without losing your shirt

Distribution bonds offer a decent return – as well as peace of mind. Nic Cicutti reports

The search by investors for the elusive combination of respectable income plus good capital growth – and all without risking one's shirt – has led to the launch of a variety of savings products.

Today, the most popular investment, without doubt, is a personal equity plan. PEPs allow savers the opportunity for growth and income, all in a tax-free wrapper.

But there is one – currently unused – savings product that has attracted more than £3bn of savers' money. It has generally succeeded in growing ahead of inflation while offering a reasonable income. And apart from a cold suffered in 1994, it has proved a generally safe haven for funds.

Distribution bonds have proved a popular option for almost 200,000 savers in the past 15 years.

Essentially, they are a form of unit-linked savings scheme, with a generally conservative investment strategy. Funds are spread across a range of equities, gilts and other

fixed-interest investments. Income from bonds, usually paid on two distribution dates each year, is free of capital gains and income tax at the basic rate.

Among the most popular distribution bonds are those from Sun Life, Prudential, Allied Dunbar, Standard, Scottish Provident and AXA Equity & Law.

While generally considered a safer investment, different distribution funds will have varying investment strategies and risks attached to them. In turn, the annual income paid can vary between 4 and 7 per cent a year, depending on the bond. Sales of the bonds have waxed and waned compared with other products on the market.

Andrew Jones, a partner at the Aaron Partnership, a firm of independent financial advisers in Milton Keynes, says: "They were very popular until mid-1994. The problem came in that year when both equity and bond markets fell in the same year. Given that these products were marketed as low-risk funds, it

made a lot of people nervous." Since then, many investors have preferred other products, including with-profit bonds. But they have greater exposure to equities than distribution bonds.

Unlike PEPs, distribution bonds are the subject of a "tax-drag" effect on the life company fund itself. Higher-rate taxpayers can currently withdraw up to 5 per cent of the initial capital value each year, without paying any tax. They pay a further 16 per cent (17 per cent after 5 April) on sums above that 5 per cent.

For many savers, PEPs are a more sensible option, particularly given that some companies, including Sun Life, have set up plans under a tax-free wrapper which replicate faithfully the fund strategy of a distribution bond.

In fact, some financial advisers believe the bonds are not a useful investment tool at all. One, who refuses to be named, argues: "The particular mix of funds is one which can just as easily be set up by any

adviser through the right portfolio of investment trusts or PEPs, which may have lower charges."

"What worries me is that these are nice little commission-earners for advisers and they may put a client into a distribution bond before any other product."

Mr Jones argues that distribution bonds can still be useful: "If you have invested up to your PEP limit, a distribution bond may offer an additional opportunity for relatively risk-free investment."

Many advisers, including the Aaron Partnership, are prepared to enhance bonds through commission rebating or by obtaining better terms from the life company.

The company recommends that bonds are a better haven for spare cash than annuity products in retirement, as a supplement for those who have recently retired.

Despite the keen competition among bond providers, the company says all the others still want to beat Sun Life, whose fund was set up in 1979. The fund invests about 40

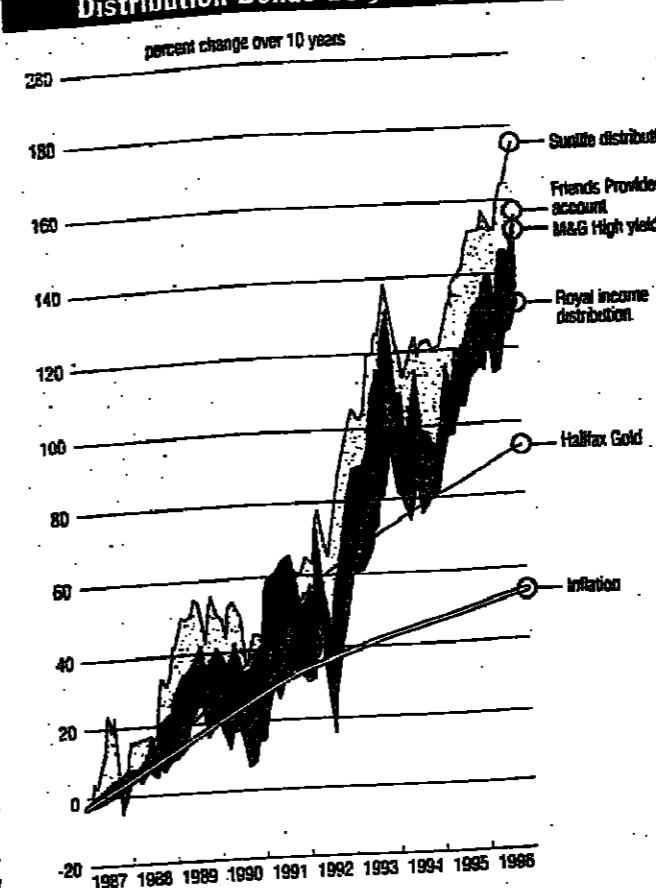
per cent in UK equities, a further 40 per cent in fixed-interest stocks and the remainder in cash or other convertibles.

It does not invest either in property or overseas equities, claiming this policy makes the fund more secure. Although it has ridden relatively unscathed through most market downturns, including the October 1987 crash or the dip after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the fund caught a cold in the 1993 downturn along with all others.

The key for distribution bonds, as with most investments, is to discuss the matter fully with an independent adviser first. But for some, these funds may be the answer to the age-old conundrum of how to provide safety, growth and reasonable income.

Copies of the Aaron Partnership guide to distribution bonds are available, price £2 (inc P&P), by writing to Shelton House, High Street, Woburn Sands, Milton Keynes, MK17 8SD.

Distribution Bonds-10 years performance



Source: Aaron Partnership

## Pensions split will reduce the traumas of divorce

Nic Cicutti

Divorce must be one of the most traumatic experiences that grown men and women can go through. The recognition that a broken relationship can no longer be mended and that permanent separation must take place is not a decision lightly taken.

For many women, there is then the problem of how they will survive financially. Often, the family depended solely or mostly on a husband's income. Now they must learn new skills, re-entering the jobs marketplace for the first time in years.

To cap it all, until now there has always been the problem of adequate pension provision for woman after their divorce. In the past, many women discovered too late that divorce meant penury in retirement because their husband had retained all pension rights for himself.

That is why this week's decision on pension-splitting at divorce, announced by the Government, is a good move.

Ministers had long wanted to divide pensions after a divorce. However, the way they intended to do so was silly. In effect, they wanted pension-less divorcees to lay a claim to part of their former partner's pension, but payable only when they retired.

The problem with this approach was that it left women tied to their ex-husbands' financial coat-tails, possibly for many years.

Worse, it meant that if the husband died before retirement, the woman might receive no pension at all. It took a revolt in the Lords two years ago to force the Government to change its mind, as it finally did this week.

The problem is, however, that the Government has not said when this change will take place. It equivocated for two years, while another 360,000 couples divorced, and it now looks as if it may be at least one more year – and a further 180,000 divorces – before its proposals become law, whichever party wins the general election.

Perhaps one should not expect much more than this, given that we are at the fag-end of the present administration. But there is something intensely annoying that a proposal so sensible has taken all these

years to make it to the statute books. The system has let hundreds of thousands of innocent people down.

Last week we inaugurated our advice column with a review of Paula Martin's finances. Paula had problems with a hideously expensive personal pension sold to her in the late 1980s by someone from a company called Merchant Investors.

On Monday, Merchant Investors were in touch with Paula to apologise for what happened. They have promised to reinstate her into the occupational pension scheme she should have joined all that time ago. A few years ago, the company reviewed its charges and recognised it had a problem. It discarded most of its expensive admin fees for new pensions it sells and is now one of the cheapest in the market.

But that still left people like Paula stuck on the old contracts. Significantly, the company has made a commitment to look at all policies from the same time to see if it can resolve problems any other policyholders may have. So, if you have a Merchant Investors pension dating to that period, get in touch with the company.

By the way, Paula's original salesman went off to join another company, now called Lincoln National. While there, he sold Paula another policy that may have been inappropriate. He was undoubtedly prolific and has probably given many other people the benefits of his salesmanship. Let's see if Lincoln National contacts us next week...

This week, the advice column discusses other subjects. Dozens of you have written asking for a review. We can't promise everyone will get one, but we hope to select cases that will give all readers food for thought. Keep writing in if you want to take part.

Indeed, if there is any point you want to make, a gripe about your financial provider, a friendly comment about one of this section's stories, send me a letter.

Write to: Nic Cicutti, Financial Advice Offer, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5DL.

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# No scramble for dinosaur eggs

**Collect to invest:** They may be old but they're not rare, says John Windsor

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Dinosaur eggs for Easter: £225-£400 each

The market for fossilised dinosaur eggs has boomed and busted since they began being smuggled out of China via Hong Kong in their hundreds five years ago. Whether you buy now, at the bottom of the market, depends on whether you think the Chinese will increase their rarity by putting a stop to smuggling. The latest buzz, however, is that there are 10,000 dinosaur eggs waiting to be illegally shipped to the United States and Australia before Hong Kong is handed back to the Chinese on 30 June.

Peak prices coincided with *Jurassic Park* fever: £1,600 was paid at Bonhams in 1994 for the egg of a sauropod (plant-eating) dinosaur by Oliver Hoare, art dealer and confidant of Princess Diana. In the same auction, a nest of 10 sauropod eggs, embedded in heavy clay, fetched £46,200.

Fresh out of Hong Kong, eggs of the therizinosaur, a two-legged theropod (meat-eater) known as the scythe lizard because of its menacing two-foot claws, change hands for \$300, according to Terry Manning, the Leicestershire fossil dealer and researcher.

He had just returned from last week's big 10-day fair of fossil, mineral and gem dealers in Tucson, Arizona, where Chinese dealers from Hong Kong had whispered the latest on smuggling.

Dinosaur eggs, not found in the UK, are part of native antiquity in the US, so that is where the market is. Mr Manning had seen fine qual-

ity therizinosaur eggs offered by dealers at the fair for \$900 and fine quality sauropod eggs for \$1,000. Run-of-the-mill specimens were changing hands for \$150-\$800 – a higher price than a year or 18 months ago, when, after a rush of consignments from Hong Kong, eggs in average condition were at a rock-bottom \$50-\$100.

He scoffed rumours that Chinese had been executed and imprisoned by the authorities for smuggling dinosaur eggs. They had in fact been executed and imprisoned by the army – “the biggest smuggler, a kind of mafia” – for refusing to co-operate with its illegal

egg smuggling. Mr Manning's ambition is to do a Jurassic – to use a computer to reconstruct dinosaur DNA from biological remains found in their unhatched eggs, then clone a living dinosaur by inserting the DNA into a bird embryo. He admits that the computer power needed is the equivalent of the total information on the Internet (where, incidentally, dinosaur eggs are for sale at \$800-\$1,200).

But the recent cloning of an adult animal – a sheep – has taken his project a micron or two out of the realms of science fiction.

In the past four years he has bought 1,600 fossilised

therizinosaur eggs, ranging in price from \$500 each for the first 250 to \$48 each for 50 inferior specimens from Japan. Out of the total, he has found only 15 that contain biological remains – bones and tiny teeth, proving, incidentally, that the embryo dinosaurs had cut a third set of teeth by the time they were ready to break out of the egg.

Each egg with a “commercially viable” embryo, he calculates, has cost him \$72,000. In an attempt to recoup costs, he offered two of them at Phillips New York in December, each with a reserve of \$125,000. They failed to sell. But a well-preserved therizinosaur

egg sold for \$3,737 in the same sale. Phillips' David Hirschowitz will sell only top-condition eggs (up to 95 per cent intact). He can get \$4,000 for a good sauropod egg that a dealer could get only \$800 for – proving that, in the US, some private buyers still think dinosaur eggs are rare.

Ironically, it is the expensive eggs with real embryo inside that are the least decorative. They are often found crushed. The “inflated” ones that still look like eggs – such as Mr Martin's Easter eggs – are the ones that have hatched. Minerals that drifted through the hole left by the hatching dinosaur preserve their shape.

Mr Martin's eggs have been identified as therizinosaur by the Natural History Museum. But some measure 3in by 3in, compared with the usual 3in by 2in for therizinosaur, and some experts, such as Mr Manning, reckon they are more likely sauropod. They are 65 per cent intact, the remainder of what was once shell having been replaced by hard red Chinese clay.

Ironically, the fact that there is virtually no market for dinosaur eggs in this country makes them relatively hard to find. Bonhams no longer offers them. In fact, Bonhams auctioneer Philip Keith, still famous for his coup in getting a peak £46,200 for a clutch of 10, is heartily sick of the things. He values average-condition eggs in this country at £100-£300.

He says: “I could name 150 collectors and dealers in the US, the Far East and Europe who want to sell. Not a week goes by without my being offered some. I tell vendors that they are not rare and that nobody wants them, but they don't believe me. At the end of the day, they're just eggs, aren't they. I think they're boring.”

*Chris Martin: 85 The Vale, Southgate, London N14 6AT*



Dinosaur eggs for Easter: For sale at £225-£400 each

PHOTOGRAPH: NICOLA KURTZ

## Click on cameras

John Windsor's auction round-up

The year is weak, now is the time to buy Leica cameras, whether for use or as collectables. Up to 40 per cent of the money bid for cameras in London comes from Japan and the year's decreased buying power has prompted Christie's South Kensington to throttle back estimates by 10 per cent, especially at the top of the market.

Secondhand Leicas are not expensive. A couple of hundred pounds can buy one. At South Kensington's camera sale on Thursday (2pm), a Leica IIIc of the early Forties is estimated at £200-£300.

The housing market is on the move, and so, therefore, are the more traditional modern British paintings. Bullish estimates at Sotheby's, Wednesday (10.30am), on Edward Seago, Dorothy Sharp and – a glimmer of more refined taste – Gwen John, whose watercolour of a young girl is est £4,000-£6,000. More modern Brits at South Kensington, Friday (10.30am).

### Countrywide auctions

Manchester: Domestic electrical appliances, including popcorn and bread makers, telephone answering machines, Thursday (11am) at 51a Broughton Lane. Auction International (0161-832 2400).

Plymouth: Computers and peripherals at the Novotel, tomorrow (11am). South West Computer Auctions (01934-642437). Headcorn, Kent: A 1952 Rolls Bentley, a cabin cruiser, a Thirties model locomotive, among 1,000 lots at the Weald of Kent Golf Club, Monday (12 noon). Wealden Auction Galleries (01622-891568).

### Fairs

London Autograph Fair, Chesterfield Hotel, Charles Street, Mayfair, West London, tomorrow (01483-232423).

London International Watch Fair, Music Rooms, 26 Molton Lane, London W1 tomorrow (0171-499 0564).

Ardingly: Tuesday-Wednesday. IACF (01636-702326). Further information about auctions and fairs: *Antiques Trade Gazette* and *Government Auction News* (fax information line 0356-423488).



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## inside back

31

Serena Mackesy  
In my week

The news was waiting on the answering machine. Christie's have pulled out. Seems some other celebrity's dress collection is going on sale



Whatever happened to...  
**Eddie 'the Eagle'**  
Edwards

## Where eagles dare

On 1 March 1988 Eddie the Eagle returned home to Britain a star, having come last in the Olympic ski-jumping event. 56th out of 56. He captured the nation's hearts as a great British loser tripping over his baggage in front of the world's media; reading *7/8/88* and waving to the crowd while lounging at the top of the 90th slope before jumping. After the

games he travelled to Finland to record a pop song only to find the composer had just died of a heart attack. In the wake of his sporting triumphs, the plasterer from Cheltenham gave press conferences and promoted Eagle T-shirts. But he didn't let such success go to his head, staying with his parents in a house that backed on to a hospital. Handy for an ski-jump accident in 1989 in which he broke his

collarbone (bone-breaking being a regular pastime). He joked later that they "planned to do a brain scan to see if there was a brain there."

## Crash landing

He didn't capture the hearts of the British Olympic Association, though, who banned him from competing at the Albertville games in 1992, on the grounds that he was

jumping without due care and attention.

## Wings of hope

Eddie's trademark bad luck started to become increasingly uncharitable. In 1993, he hit the headlines after clearing a 10-car ski-jump and damaging his own vehicle in the process (it had been parked too close to the ramp). By 1994, his star had begun to wane. Refused

entrance at Lillehammer because he was wearing slalom rather than jumping skis, he was reduced to making public appearances by other means, opening a holiday home in Devon in a chicken outfit because it was the closest they had to an eagle. His latest idea is a comeback at the Winter Olympics in 1998. But he's getting on a bit. He may be able to fly, but can he land?

James Anfus

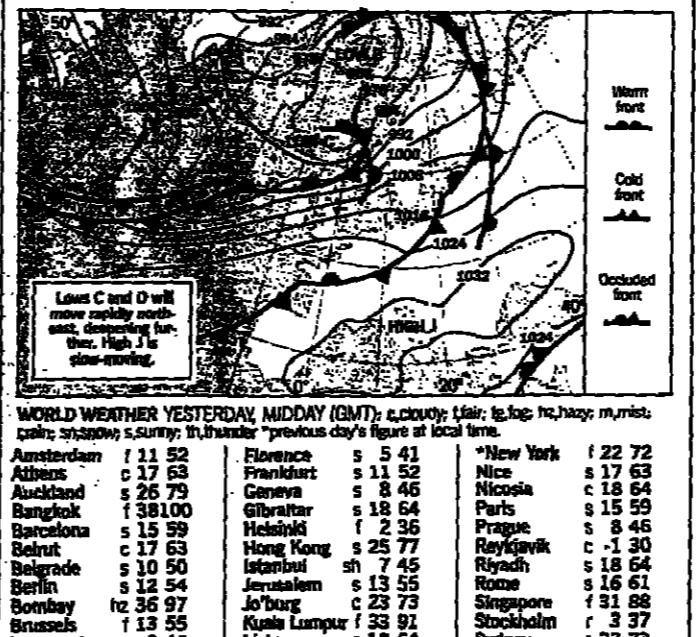
## WEATHER



## The British Isles

General Situation and 5-Day Outlook: Pressure will remain low to the north and high to the south with fronts moving east across the British Isles. Today, Scotland and the Northern and Western Isles will get a lot of wet and windy weather with a southwesterly gale. There will be some bright spells to the south and east: Northern Ireland will be cloudy with heavy rain and a blustery southwesterly wind. England and Wales will be mostly dry with hazy sunsets. However, there will be lots of cloud and a strengthening southwesterly wind with showery rain to the north. Rain will clear during Sunday, followed by sunshine, showers and gusty westerly winds. Monday will see scattered showers, but also some sunshine, and the wind will ease. Tuesday will be fine with sunshine and patchy cloud, but rain will spread into the northwest before moving south during Wednesday. Brighter weather and showers will follow, but southern England may stay dry.

## Europe and The World



## Air Quality

Yesterday's Readings		Outlook for Today	
		NO <sub>2</sub>	SO <sub>2</sub>
London	Good	Good	Good
S England	Good	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good	Good

## High Tides

	AM	HT	PM	HT
London	5.42	6.16	18.16	1.55
Liverpool	3.02	4.4	15.27	8.3
Bristol	11.00	11.6	23.23	11.3
Hull	10.08	6.7	22.34	5.8
Gronau	4.80	3.0	16.44	3.2
Durham	3.38	3.6	16.07	1.5

## Sun and Moon

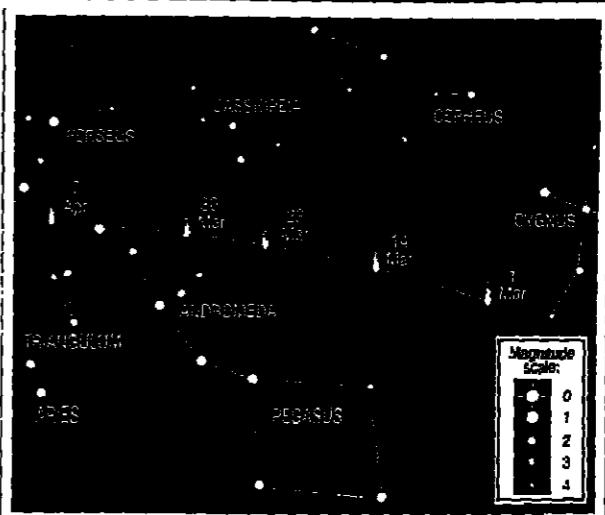
	Sun rises	6.45am	Sun sets	5.41pm
Moon rises	12.12am			
Moon sets			9.50am	
Fall moon	March 24			

## AA Roadwatch

London A305 Hammersmith Bridge: Closed both ways to general traffic for structural work. Expect congestion on both sides of the river.  
Bristol, M5 J18-19: Cottswold in operation across the Avonmouth Bridge with a 30mph speed limit. Regular rush-hour delays.  
Suffolkshire, A5 near M61/J2: Closed both ways between Galley Island (A449) and the M61/J2 for roadworks. Diversions in via the A5, A460 and M54.  
M1 West Yorkshire: 347 Leeds (M621/A63) Holbeck: long-term roadworks and lane closures with speed limits down to 30mph. Expect delays on the M1, M621 and Dewsbury Road.  
M4 J1-2 and A4, Chiswick area: Various weekend closures for maintenance work on the elevated section of the M4. (A1 closed between M4/J2 slip roads under elevated section. Diversions in operation).

City of Edinburgh, M8/J2: Major roadworks, with lane closures on the roundabout at J2 (Newbridge Spur). Out and about with AA Roadwatch cell 0333 403 1000 for the latest road and traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Call charged at 30p per min (plus VAT), 45p per min (all other times) inc VAT.

## The Sky at Night



The position of Comet Hale-Bopp through March and early April

Comet Hale-Bopp is now a spectacular first magnitude object, easily visible to the naked eye. It is expected to brighten by about another magnitude during the coming month. As anticipated, it has developed the two tails characteristic of comets: a broad curving dust tail and a narrower, straighter gas tail. Low power binoculars will afford a fine view. The darker you skies, the more tail you will see. A finding chart is hardly necessary since the comet is so conspicuous, but it serves to illustrate the comet's day-to-day passage against the stars. For the next couple of weeks, Comet Hale-Bopp is still best observed in the hour or two before dawn, low in the north-eastern sky. From the middle of the month, there will also be an evening viewing opportunity. The comet will hang low over the northwest horizon as the evening sky darkens. By the end of March, early evening will be the better time to observe it.

Jacqueline Mitton

## Sounding off about noise

Robert Hanks  
the week on radio

fact. You suspect that meaning only seems important when you have to sit down and write a series of talks on sound, and here, the effort to find meaning pushed Connor towards the condition of inhuman sound, turning them into something merely mechanical.

A serendipitous piece of scheduling had The Music Machine (Radio 3, Monday-Friday) running a series of programmes on music which Charles Hazlewood characterised as "the cement of modern life, which fills in all the gaps and excludes the draughts of silence". What became clear from these programmes was how far music is deprived of meaning when it is played constantly. It wasn't always like this - Habitats first introduced in-store music in 1964, people would dance in the aisles; now, music teachers complain that students exposed to background music are becoming incapable of sitting down and listening.

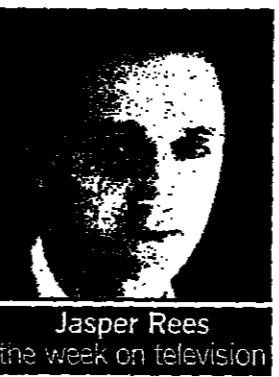
We've learnt to ignore the noise in sound more completely than ever before, in

thread which ran through all five programmes was the idea that in a world surrounded by more noise than ever before - the ticking of clocks, the revving of engines, the clacking of the Walkman, the trilling and bleeping of phones, the whirs, clicks and beeps of computers - we tend to impose artificial meanings on noise, to construe them as a kind of speech. Dr Connor spoke of inhuman sounds pushing towards the condition of the voice, of the modern obsession with noise.

We're, certainly, obsessed

with noise in the sense that we seem to want an awful lot of

## A case of mine over matter

Jasper Rees  
the week on television

of Italian actors being dubbed into Italian. But British audiences are allergic to dubbing and, although spared that indignity, had to put up with some clumsy post-synching of the non-English actors. Poor Claudio Amendola, as the eponymous fixer, was fatally emasculated by his sluggish pronunciation. If Colin Firth gave the most imposing and naturalistic performance, he would be the first to admit that he had a head start.

And however overweening its ambition, the production was undermined by the paucity of its copious crowd scenes. Here was one deficiency which could have been made good with a little capital outlay. They needed the sort of frenzied multitude brazenly bussed in to liven up *The Brit Awards*. You were reminded of *Nostromo* when the Bee Gees won their lifetime achievement gong and a clip showed them singing "New York Mining Disaster 1941". After its Rhodesian Mining Disaster 1996, also known as *Rhodes*, the BBC has suffered a Colombian Mining Disaster 1997. Expect a drama about Arthur Scargill in about 12 months' time, in which, following the trend of the meaningful cameo, Scargill will make an appearance as the leader of the Coal Board.

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### The big picture

JFK Sun 9.30pm BBC2

Writing about Oliver Stone's marathon take on the assassination of President Kennedy, this paper's Adam Mars-Jones referred to Stone "compulsively fingering the stigma of the martyred Kennedy". Here it is, then, in slow-motion, flashback – any way you want it – the events of November 1963, with Kevin Costner (above) as New Orleans DA Jim Garrison, trying to get to the bottom of things. Factually shaky and carried away by its own rhetoric, but Stone has done little that is better.

### Television preview

Recommended viewing this weekend by Gerard Gilbert

**Y**ou've got to admire the demographic acumen of movie *Asteroid* (Sat 11.15). The rock in question could have landed anywhere on the globe – Siberia, say, or the Indian Ocean – but it chose to impact smack on top of the American Midwest, scoring a bullethead on a hydro-electric dam to boot.

*Asteroid* is a chip off the old *Independence Day* block, except that the intergalactic threat is impersonal this time, and more credible. As a dinosaur, Michael Biehn, who played the hero in *Terminator*, runs around manfully evacuating Kansas City; Annabella Sciorra is the astronomer who told them so. It's all right, really, and a lot less monotonous than *Independence Day*.

It's not a bad night for science fiction, in fact. *Crime Traveller* (Sat BBC1) has Michael French (shifty ladies man David Wicks from *EastEnders*) as a police detective who owns a novel weapon in the fight against crime – a rickety, home-made time machine, knocked up by the department's science officer (Chloe Annett), in her living room. This is a fabulous idea, delivered

like a Lew Grade ATP drama circa 1972. I don't know if it's deliberate this was, but the result is a hoot. Sue Johnston plays their boss, exfoliating away at each crime scene, Michael Winner-style. The only doubt is with Michael French. Just as some TV actors don't transfer well to the big screen, I'm not sure French travels that well from soaps to the action genre. He acts better with his eyes than with his arms and legs.

After *The Real Holiday Show*, a real marriage show. *Love Life* (Sun C4) puts hidden cameras into the home of a couple whose marriage is going through the emotional equivalent of northern Greenland during a cold snap. Enter Dr Jane Reibstein and her five key-words for a happy relationship: "protection", "balance", "focus", "gratitude" and "pleasure". This week's little lesson concerns "protection", or "your partner is your unique ally". And there are examples of real-life happy marriages for us to study – so that we can recognise "protection" in its natural habitat. Uncertain partners might like to watch alone.

Which brings us neatly to *Performance*, which begins a new run of filmed stage drama with the

*Crime Traveller* Sat 8.10pm BBC1  
Performance Company Sat 8.30pm BBC2  
Asteroid Sat 9.10pm ITV  
Love Life Sun 7.30pm C4  
Omnibus Sun 10.20pm BBC1  
The South Bank Show Sun 11pm ITV

Dominic Warehouse's 1996 version of Stephen Sondheim's *Company* (Sat BBC2). Amazingly, this is the first West End revival of this fabulous musical since it first appeared back in 1971. Apart from the stuff about smoking pot for the first time, Sondheim's witty take on the joys and pitfalls of being married/single hasn't dated in the slightest. In fact, in the case of Britain, it is probably more contemporary now than it was in the early 1970s.

The *South Bank Show* (Sun C4) takes The Bee Gees back to their Mancunian roots and demonstrates that, like all great pop survivors (although association with *Saturday Night Fever* nearly killed them), they are first and foremost great song-writers. *Omnibus* (Sun BBC1) has a tantalising portrait of the 88-year-old Count Baltazar Klossowski de Rola, to give the painter Baltus his real name. Baltus is probably best-known for his "enigmatic" portraits of young girls – enigmatic in the sense that the young girls are exoticised. Baltus swears he is not, as he puts it, a follower of Nabokov. "The young-girl issue" as Baltus puts it, comes to dominate the film. A pity.

### The big match

Five Nations: England v France Sat 2.25pm BBC1

Terrestrial viewers' last chance to watch this fixture (all of England's Twickenham games have been bought by BSkyB) and this is the one which will decide where the silverware goes this year. Phil de Glanville may have called for a clamp-down on the pre-match festivities, but don't necessarily expect the crowds to last on the pitch. The fixtures are without all their first choices for the three-quarter line, but welcome back Alain Perraud (above), captain of European club champions, Bayonne.

# Saturday television and radio

## BBC 1

- 7.00 Harry and the Hendersons (R/KS/T) (1840604).
- 7.25 News, Weather (3282371).
- 7.30 Children's BBC: Felix the Cat (3888991).
- 7.45 Phantom 2040 (8216881).
- 8.10 The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest (5008468).
- 8.35 The Flintstones (5277791).
- 9.00 Live and Kicking, Record company boss Paul Burger is in the Hot Seat, Ant and Dec and Eternal perform their latest singles, and Susan Tully talks about Red Nose Day (S) (793008975).
- 12.12 Weather (7/7626).
- 12.15 Grandstand: Football Focus (2353333).
- 1.00 News (8197551).
- 1.05 Racing from Newbury: The 1.15 race (4786353).
- 1.25 Skirt: the women's downhill from Nagano, Japan (59691604).
- 1.40 Racing from Newbury: the 1.45 race (33745062).
- 1.55 Rugby Union (33768913).
- 2.10 Racing from Newbury: the 2.15 race (36396826).
- 2.25 Rugby Union England v France: Live coverage from Twickenham (kick-off 3pm). See *The big match*, above.
- 3.00 Final Score (35657245).
- 4.40 Final Score (3593536).
- 5.00 Rugby Union: extended highlights of Scotland v Ireland (6913).
- 5.30 News, Weather (7) (383975).
- 5.40 Regional News and Weather (598246).
- 5.45 Dad's Army (R/T) (26791).
- 6.15 The New Adventures of Superman (S) (870623).
- 7.00 Noel's House Party. The bearded prankster puts one over on Burnie Burne, while the Spice Girls and Ronne Corbett drop by (S) (626159).
- 7.50 The National Lottery. Live. With Wet Wet Wet and Joanne May (S/T) (7136975).
- 8.10 Crime Traveller. See Preview, above (S/T) (7961787).
- 9.00 News and Sport, Weather (7) (444325).
- 9.20 Film: Dancing in the Dark (Bill Corcoran 1995 US). One woman's fight against the lecherous advances of her father-in-law, a pillar of the Texas legal community (T) (7264256).
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## Who controls China

## The Communist Party of China

GENERAL SECRETARY



Jiang Zemin

## POLITBURO STANDING COMMITTEE



The Magnificent Seven: The top echelon of party politics (there are another 11 full members of the Politburo)

the party body in charge of the military (There is a parallel Central Military Commission under the NPC with the same membership)

Chairman: Jiang Zemin Vice-Chairman: Liu Huaqing

Chairman: Zhang Zhen Vice-Chairman: Zhang Wannian

Chairman: Chi Haotian Vice-Chairman: Li Ruihuan

CENTRAL MILITARY COMMISSION

Chairman: Jiang Zemin Vice-Chairman: Liu Huaqing

Chairman: Zhang Zhen Vice-Chairman: Zhang Wannian

Chairman: Chi Haotian Vice-Chairman: Li Ruihuan

## The State

PRESIDENT OF CHINA



Jiang Zemin

## NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS (NPC)

CHAIRMAN



Qiao Shi (may retire March 1998)

STATE COUNCIL

China's cabinet (all also Politburo members)



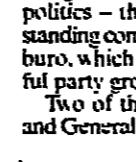
Li Peng (must retire March 1998)



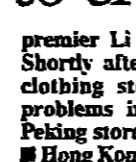
Zhu Rongji



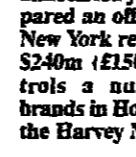
Zou Jiahua



Qian Qichen



Li Lanqing



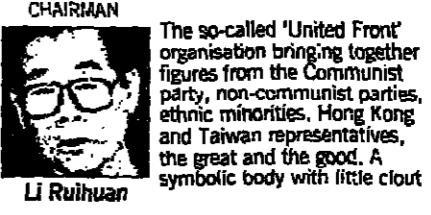
Wu Bangguo



Jiang Chunchun

## CHINESE PEOPLE'S POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE (CPPCC)

CHAIRMAN



Li Ruihuan

The so-called "United Front" organisation bringing together figures from the Communist party, non-communist parties, ethnic minorities, Hong Kong and Taiwan representatives, the great and the good. A symbolic body with little clout

## Magnificent Seven start secretive struggle to guide China into the new millennium

Behind the scenes of the People's Congress, the jockeying is under way, writes Teresa Poole

Peking — China's election year formally kicks off this morning with the start of the annual meeting of the National People's Congress (NPC), the country's parliament.

No one need expect surprises: the 3,000 delegates will rubber stamp new legislation in the wake of Deng Xiaoping's death just as they have always done. But behind the scenes the real jockeying for positions is starting, with several top jobs up for grabs over the next 12 months.

Even without Deng's death, this was always going to be the year when President Jiang Zemin had to cement his position as first among equals in the post-Deng era.

But, as in the West, Chinese politics involves a considerable element of keeping your allies happy and containing your enemies. In China this year it is a question of who gets what position. One Western diplomat

said this week: "There is still a lot to be fought over, but this does not mean they will fall out in some overt fashion."

A problem with interpreting Chinese power structures is that job titles have often counted for little. Thus, Deng held no formal position after 1990 but remained the most influential person in China's

In contrast, Mr Jiang has had every possible title heaped on him, including head of state, party chief, and military commander, to bolster his position as a seemingly weak leader.

Another confusing factor is that the important state personnel decisions due to be implemented at the NPC next March, such as the selection of new prime minister, will in fact be made at the Communist party congress this Autumn.

As Hong Kong marches towards a future under Chinese rule, who's in and who's out?

The owners are not good for those who want to kick against the pricks.

Jimmy Lai, publisher of the outspoken *Apple Daily* newspaper, yesterday suffered a financial blow when the chief underwriter of a planned share issue pulled out. His Next media

The manoeuvring ahead of that congress start today with this year's NPC. A full congress is held only once every five years, with annual plenary meetings in between. It is the most important date in China's

five-year political cycle. State, party and military top personnel shuffle the top jobs between themselves. As the chart shows, the same faces appear on both sides of the supposed divide between the Com-

munist party and the organs of state government.

Mr Jiang's face appears as head of the party, the state, and the party's Central Military Commission (CMC), which controls the army. He heads the

"Magnificent Seven" of Chinese politics — the members of the standing committee of the Politburo, which is the most powerful party grouping.

Two of the seven, Mr Jiang and General Liu, are also on the

party CMC. Five of the seven,

Jiang Zemin, Li Peng, Qiao Shi, Li Ruihuan, and Zhu Rongji, all have senior state positions.

The personnel decisions

which have to be made this year

include: Will Mr Jiang keep all three top jobs? Who will take over as prime minister in March 1998 when Li Peng steps down?

Leading contenders are the

politburo member and Jiang

ally, Wu Bangguo, and vice

prime ministers, Li Lanqing and Zhu Rongji. What new

position can Mr Jiang offer Mr Li to secure his loyalty?

Current thinking is that Mr

Jiang wants to re-invent the

post of party chairman (a position

held by Mao Zedong) for himself, and Mr Li would be offered a vice-chairmanship.

But would that satisfy Mr Li,

whose unpopularity seems to

rule him out for any high profile representative post, such as

president?

What will Mr Jiang do with

Mr Qiao, a man billed as a qua-

si-reformer who has built a

power base as head of the NPC?

These two men do not get along, and this is Mr Jiang's most challenging gamble.

There is nothing in the constitu-

tion which says Mr Qiao cannot continue at the NPC, but he is expected to step down because of his age. Would he be satisfied with another deputy chairmanship of the party?

Will Mr Jiang finally be able to retire Generals Liu and

Zhang from the party CMC, and install two more of his mil-

itary allies?

Shuffling the pack will also

mean bringing in a crop of new

faces over the next year, the

men who will lead China in the

21st century. For the moment,

Mr Jiang remains the favourite.

## Fortune frowns on he who dares to criticise

Andrew Marshall

As Hong Kong marches towards a future under Chinese rule, who's in and who's out?

The owners are not good for those who want to kick against the pricks.

Young Wai-hong, the group chairman, said that Next approached a dozen merchant bankers to underwrite the flotation, and most stayed out. Mr

Yeung said one cited political

reasons while another said it

first wanted to consult Chinese

representatives in Hong Kong.

Mr Yeung said that the lead

underwriter, San Hung Kai Internation Ltd, told Next that

it was pulling out. A spokesman

for the company said the

decision was purely commercial.

But the message is clear:

Peking doesn't like Mr Lai.

He probably knew that already.

In 1994 he published an

editorial that called the Chinese

premier Li Peng a "moron".

Shortly afterwards, Mr Lai's

clothing store, his licensing

problems in China and his

Peking store was closed.

Hong Kong (AP) — The Hong

Kong retailer Dickson Concepts

announced yesterday it has pre-

pared an offer to take over the

New York retailer Barney's for

\$240m (£150m). Dickson con-

trols a number of fashion

brands in Hong Kong, and owns

the Harvey Nichols Group.

But would that satisfy Mr Li,

whose unpopularity seems to

rule him out for any high profile

representative post, such as

president?

What will Mr Jiang do with

Mr Qiao, a man billed as a qua-

si-reformer who has built a

## obituaries / gazette

# Sir Duncan McDonald

As managing director of Bruce Peebles, power station equipment engineers, as chief executive of Reyrolle Parsons, switch-gear engineers, and as chairman of Northern Engineering Industries, Duncan McDonald had more in common with his heroes Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806-59), Daniel Gooch (1816-89) and the great Victorian engineer-managers, than modern industrialist-accountant managers who work in terror of stockmarket analysts and the havoc they may cause. It is perhaps an indication of how industrial perceptions have changed in the last quarter of a century, not necessarily for the better, that McDonald told me proudly: "I have raised the number of people working for us in our companies to nearly 35,000." He would not like to have said: "I have cut the workforce, becoming more cost-effective, and have done x per cent better than last year."

What McDonald cared about, explained Hannish Morrison, former chief executive of the Scottish Council of Development and Industry, was giving people worthwhile engineering work which would give them job satisfaction and be useful to society and Britain. I never did discern what McDonald's personal policies were, but frequently sitting beside him on the Edinburgh-London plane I came to know that he had an obsessive horror of human waste in the shape of unemployment

and a demonic energy in trying to do something about it by providing skilled jobs.

He was a passionate power engineer who believed, above all else, that the prime mover in the power station, the turbine, had to be perfect. If not there would be many other problems. He motivated people, who recognised that he knew where every proverbial nut and bolt should go in the burning instrument. I saw at first hand how he was admired on account of his engineering expertise and an ability to understand the complexities of any task being carried out by his employees. On many occasions, I went round the Bruce Peebles plant at Broxburn, West Lothian with him as the local MP and sensed the respect in which he was held by shop-floor and junior managers alike. Shirt-sleeved and immaculate, he made a point of knowing everyone in the factory by name. The result was that when the transformer industry was undergoing periods of traumatic change in the 1960s and 1970s, he was given co-operation by the Amalgamated Engineering Union. Soft-spoken, with a twinkle in his eye, McDonald's philosophy was that bugs, problems, technical and human, were there to be addressed quietly, unostentatiously and with sustained intelligence.

He was born within sight of the Forth Bridge, the son of a cable joiner with the then South of Scotland Electricity Board, now Scottish Power.

During his childhood in Inverkeithing he had been inspired by Sir John Fowler's wonderful cantilevers. Whenever I saw him he would say to me as the MP for South Queensferry, "Are you looking after my bridge property? Are you sure that rust, which never sleeps, is not getting a hold?"

He was an inspiration to those of us who campaign for properly maintaining the greatest engineering monument to the 19th century. It was a great pleasure to him when the company of Sir William Arrol had been added to his Northern Engineering conglomerate since Arrol had been in the 1890s for the Forth Bridge's construction.

In the early years of the Second World War he obtained first class honours in electrical engineering at Edinburgh University, and went on reserved occupation as a graduate apprentice to British Thompson Houston at Rugby. When the war ended, BT&H earmarked him for research and development, in transformer design which suited his talents perfectly.

In 1954 he transferred to Bruce Peebles Industries and became their chief transformer designer from 1954 to 1959, when he was promoted as chief engineer. In 1962 he became managing director, and in 1974 chairman and chief executive, both of Bruce Peebles and of Reyrolle Parsons. Bob Smith, Bruce Peebles' quality and safety

manager, who worked with him from 1954, described McDonald as "superb during the difficult mergers of Bruce Peebles, Reyrolle Parsons and Clark Chapman. He respected the identity of Bruce Peebles and kept it as a core large transformer unit, thereby helping the morale of the workforce. Equally the managers of Reyrolle Parsons and Clark Chapman were pleased at the dignity he accorded them."

His relations with employees were further enhanced by the fact that he was a keen fly fisherman and a regular member of the Bruce Peebles fishing club. Many good relationships were formed on the banks of Scottish rivers at the expense of trout.

He was particularly interested in developments for nuclear power-stations and was elected to the board of the National Nuclear Corporation. Truth to tell, he was always ambiguous about nuclear power at a time when great efficiencies were being made in the burning of fossil fuel. He was impressed by the advanced gas-cooled reactors and praised Dr Robin Jeffery's engineering feat in the creation of Torness. He was less enthusiastic about both the Magnox stations and the problems of Dungeness B and elsewhere among the next generation of nuclear power-stations.

For ten years (1983-92) McDonald was on the board of Scottish Accident, whose chairman, the Earl of Airlie, told me



McDonald welcomes Margaret Thatcher to Northern Engineering Industries' plant in the 1980s

Photograph: Newcastle Journal

yesterday: "He was much loved not only on the board but by managers and their colleagues. He had a wonderful way with people. He put his points in a way that was most acceptable."

McDonald was a decent man by conviction and in his latter years felt that running a great company out of Newcastle put him at a disadvantage with those of his competitors whose headquarters could intimidate government in London. He felt hurt that the metropolitan stockmarket was never kind to Northern Engineering Industries and suspected that they felt that

they were some kind of sleepy set-up in the outback rather than a great international company at the cutting edge of technology – in the 1980s they had a £70m turnover. He always extolled the virtues of the Scottish Office in Edinburgh with whom he had had exceptionally cordial relations. It was characteristic of McDonald that he made time to return from Newcastle to Edinburgh for meetings of the Scottish Council of Development and Industry. Though it was common knowledge that he had been offered the chair of the Scottish Council, it was also characteris-

tic that he resisted a strong personal temptation on the grounds that the chairman of this prestigious body ought to be based in Scotland and not in the North of England.

Jim Dalyell

**Duncan McDonald, turbine engineer and industrialist born Inverkeithing, Fife 20 September 1921; CBE 1976; Group Managing Director, Northern Engineering Industries 1977-80; Chairman 1980-86; Kt 1983; married, 1955 Jane Gudcan (three sons, one daughter); died Edinburgh 23 February 1997.**

## T. H. Bridgewater



Bridgewater: experiments with John Logie Baird. Photograph: BBC

Tony Bridgewater encompassed in his own life and career the development of British television as we now know it.

Tony, or Bridgy as many BBC colleagues called him (not even his mother used his given name of Thornton), started working with John Logie Baird in 1928. He was involved with Baird's early experimental television transmissions of the 30-line mechanical system which went from his studio in Covent Garden via Savoy Hill to BBC medium-wave radio transmitter on the roof of Selfridges.

Then had to take place after the BBC's late-night dance music had closed down. Because there was only one transmitter available the crude flickering pictures and the sound could not be synchronised and had to be radiated in alternating two-minute bursts. In 1932 when the BBC took over full responsibility for these experimental programmes Bridgewater, with

two other television engineers, joined the Corporation. The operation moved into the newly built Broadcasting House and Bridgewater often announced the programmes himself from a studio shared with Henry Hall's dance band.

In 1936 he led the studio team at Alexandra Palace when the world's first public service of high-definition television opened. Baird's mechanical system, by then on 240 lines, alternated weekly with the 405-line electronic system developed by EMI to establish which was the better. In a few months EMI was the clear winner. The mechanical system was dropped, to Baird's bitter disappointment.

Bridgewater supervised, and personally directed, the first BBC television outside broadcast: the 1937 Coronation procession of King George VI as it passed Hyde Park Corner.

The brand-new mobile control room had been delivered from

camera made the next day's press headlines.

Bridgewater was in charge of the engineering aspects of many BBC outside broadcasts remembered by older viewers with admiration: the 1948 Olympic Games, the first television programme from across the Channel, the Coronation of the Queen, her first Christmas television broadcast from Sandringham, the immensely complicated and moving coverage of Sir Winston Churchill's funeral and countless other ceremonies and great sporting events. He organised television broadcasts from submarines below the surface of the sea and from aeroplanes above the surface of the land.

Bridgewater was kind, considerate and courteous. One of his outstanding qualities as an engineer was his ability to explain electronic complexities in terms readily understood by non-engineers. I was particularly grateful for this when we were

together involved in planning the introduction of BBC2 with its formidable problems of conversion to 625-line UHF transmission standards and as well as to colour capability. Bill Cotton used to say that before coming to work at White City he not only didn't understand television, he didn't even understand electricity, until Bridgewater explained both to him.

Bridgewater retired from the BBC in 1968, having been the Chief Television Engineer for the previous six years. His work for television, however, was far from over. He lectured and wrote articles for various technical journals and also contributed a scholarly monograph on A.A. Campbell Swinton, a leading pioneer of electronic, as opposed to mechanical, television. This was published by the Royal Television Society, to which he gave outstanding service over a great period. He had been elected a Fellow of the Television Society in 1930, long before it became

Royal. He was its Honorary Treasurer for 20 years, its Chairman of Council, and the recipient of its Gold Medal.

In later years Bridgewater's long and unique personal experience of the development of television made him a particularly valuable founder member of the KTS History and Archives Specialist Group. He remembered all sorts of fascinating and sometimes horrifying details. One day when we were discussing the impermanence of recorded television material he casually mentioned that in the very early days of videotape he happened to know of at least one pre-recorded play which had been accidentally wiped before transmission.

Tony Bridgewater's interest in broadcasting began as a schoolboy in Canada where he was temporarily living. He constructed first a crystal set, and then a better one with valves, and was thrilled to be able to pick up signals from the United States. On return to England he was trained in wireless telegraphy and at the age of 18 he went to sea as a wireless operator. He then worked for the Post Office on high power transmitters including those occasionally used for broadcasting to the Dominions, as they then were.

He read the technical journals avidly, and learnt of Baird's television experiments. In 1928 he managed to get an introduction to the Scottish inventor, who was beginning to expand his business. Baird engaged him and within weeks he was involved with Baird's first demonstration of recognisable, if very crude, colour television to the British Association meeting that year in Glasgow.

On 1 September 1939 Alexandra Palace abruptly had to cease transmitting television for defence reasons. Bridgewater joined the RAF and worked on radar, for which he was mentioned in despatches. On demobilisation, with the rank of Squadron Leader, he rejoined the BBC to help restart television in time for the Victory Parade in June 1946.

Leonard Mallalieu

**Thornton Howard Bridgewater, television engineer; born 1 June 1906; engineer in charge of outside broadcasts, BBC Television 1940-62; Chief Engineer 1962-88; OBE 1965; married, 1934 Jean Bartlett (died 1985; one son); died 28 February 1997.**

## Isabelle Lucas

A prolific stage actress during a career that spanned 30 years of West End musicals such as *Gone With the Wind* and the original National Theatre production of Peter Nichols' acerbic comedy *The National Health*, Isabelle Lucas won more widespread recognition on television in the Seventies as Norman Beaton's wife in *The Fosters*, Britain's first all-black situation comedy. More recently, she appeared in the all-friction soap opera *EastEnders* that included appearances alongside Elisabeth Welch and Millicent Martin in *The Crooked Mile* (1959), and as

was the daughter of a chef from Barbados who worked on the Canadian Pacific Railway. Lucas acted in amateur productions as a teenager in Toronto to before moving to London in 1954 to train as a singer. The following year, she made her West End stage debut in the revue *The Jazz Train* at the Piccadilly Theatre, a production that also gave Bertie Reading one of her early successes.

Lucas went on to carve out a distinguished musicals career that included appearances alongside Elisabeth Welch and Millicent Martin in *The Crooked Mile* (1959), and as

Barbra Streisand's maid, Emma, in *Funny Girl* and Mammy in Harold Fielding's acclaimed production of *Gone With the Wind* (1972). Her last stage musical role was alongside the vaudeville star Jack Gifford in *Look to the Rainbow* (1985), but the actress's other West End roles included appearances in the straight play *The Genius and the Goddess* (adapted from an Aldous Huxley novel, 1962) and the Neil Simon comedy *The Sunshine Boys* (1975).

Other landmarks in Lucas's stage career included playing the first black Martha in Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia*.

When she was cast as the Leader of the Bacchantes in the

National Theatre production of *Woolf?* at the Connaught Theatre, Worthing, and her first appearance with Norman Beaton in the musical *Bakerloo to Paradise* (1969), which failed to make an impact and did not reach the West End. With the National Theatre, she acted in George Bernard Shaw's *Becky Sharp* (1970), *Methusalem* (alongside Derek Jacobi, 1971) and the world premiere of *The National Health* (1969), both at the Old Vic, as well as *Cyrano* (Cambridge Theatre, 1970) and *Tiger* (New Theatre, 1971, with Norman Beaton and Maureen Lipman).

When she was cast as the Leader of the Bacchantes in the

*Husband and I* (1987-88); Gertrude in the children's series *Bluebirds*, starring Barbara Windsor; two characters in *EastEnders* – a district nurse, 1985, and nine years later Alice Alexander, who found it difficult to come to terms with her daughter Delta's revelation that she was gay – and an old flame of the Peckham barber Desmond in the Channel 4 sitcom *Desmond's* (reuniting with Norman Beaton). She also made appearances in the television film *A Caribbean Mystery* (1983) and the mini-series *Ed's Island* (1984).

Anthony Hayward

## Deaths

**CHIANG: Gerry Yuk Cho, born 30 October 1961 in Hong Kong, passed away 13 February 1997. He is survived by his loving fiance, Pauline, and his loving family in Vancouver, BC. Canadian Private services will be held.**

**For Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS, please telephone 0171-293 0210 or fax to 0171-293 2010. Charges are £15.00 a line (VAT extra).**

## Royal Engagements

**TODAY:** Prince Edward, President, attends a screening of *Letters to Juliet* and *The Thin Red Line* at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts, London W1, and opens the Thame FM Studio, Hampton Wick, Surrey. The Princess Royal, Patron, Savitri Reddy, Unicef, and Sophie, Countess of Wessex, attend an interview with Michael Stipe, lead singer of R.E.M., at the Royal Festival Hall, London SE1.

**Changing of the Guard**  
**TODAY:** The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 1pm. **TOMORROW:** The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 1pm. **EDINBURGH:** The Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Coldstream Guards.

mer chairman, Eaton Ltd, 83; Rear-Admiral Sir Charles Darlington, former Director of the Naval Education Service, 87; Lord Elton, former government minister, 67; Mr John Gardner, composer, 80; Mr Michael Gorbatchev, former president of the Soviet Union, 66; Sir Donald Gosling, joint chairman, National Car Fund, 1929-1938; Mr Ronald Groves, former chairman, Meyer International, 77; Lord Horace Troon, engineer, publisher and journalist, 73; Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, 74; Dame Naomi James, yachtswoman, 48; Mr Nicholas Jarrold, ambassador to Latvia, 51; Miss Jennifer Jones, actress, 78; Sir John Manduell, composer, and former Principal, Royal Northern College of Music, 69; Mr Hugh Munro, Headmaster, Clifton College, 47; Mr Robert Simpson, British Museum; Hilary Williams, "Thorvaldsen in Rome 1797-1838: the French prototype," made its first test flight, 1699. Tomorrow is the Feast Day of St Chad or Ceddida, St Ian of Britanny and The Martyrs of Worcester, 6th.

**BIRTHS:** Mr Harry Belafonte, actor and entertainer, 70; Mr David Broome, show jumper, 57; Mr Douglas Dunn, founder, All-England Jumping Course, Hickstead, 69; Mr Nigel Havers, cricketer, 44; Mr Roger Daltrey, singer, 43; Sir Mark Knopfler, rock star, 46; Mr Alan Alda, actor, 52; Mr Michael Caine, 70; Mr Brian Cox, scientist, 47; Sir Ian McKellen, 56; Sir Mark Todd, actor, 70; Mr Michael Palin, comedian, 53; Mark Todd, 62; Air Chief Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Central Europe, 79; Mr Martin Jones MP, 50; Sir Michael Kerr, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 76; Professor James Lister, paediatrician, 74; Mr Miles Read, disc jockey, 46; Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson, former director of the WRNS, 88; Mr David Scott Cooper, solo singer, 55; Mark Todd, 62; Air Vice-Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Central Europe, 79; Mr Michael Kerr, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 76; Professor James Lister, paediatrician, 74; Mr Miles Read, disc jockey, 46; Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson, former director of the WRNS, 88; Mr David Scott Cooper, solo singer, 55; Mark Todd, 62; Air Vice-Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Central Europe, 79; Mr Michael Kerr, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 76; Professor James Lister, paediatrician, 74; Mr Miles Read, disc jockey, 46; Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson, former director of the WRNS, 88; Mr David Scott Cooper, solo singer, 55; Mark Todd, 62; Air Vice-Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Central Europe, 79; Mr Michael Kerr, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 76; Professor James Lister, paediatrician, 74; Mr Miles Read, disc jockey, 46; Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson, former director of the WRNS, 88; Mr David Scott Cooper, solo singer, 55; Mark Todd, 62; Air Vice-Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Central Europe, 79; Mr Michael Kerr, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 76; Professor James Lister, paediatrician, 74; Mr Miles Read, disc jockey, 46; Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson, former director of the WRNS, 88; Mr David Scott Cooper, solo singer, 55; Mark Todd, 62; Air Vice-Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Central Europe, 79; Mr Michael Kerr, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 76; Professor James Lister, paediatrician, 74; Mr Miles Read, disc jockey, 46; Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson, former director of the WRNS, 88; Mr David Scott Cooper, solo singer, 55; Mark Todd, 62; Air Vice-Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Central Europe, 79; Mr Michael Kerr, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 76; Professor James Lister, paediatrician, 74; Mr Miles Read, disc jockey, 46; Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson, former director of the WRNS, 88; Mr David Scott Cooper, solo singer, 55; Mark Todd, 62; Air Vice-Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Central Europe, 79; Mr Michael Kerr, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 76; Professor James Lister, paediatrician, 74; Mr Miles Read, disc jockey, 46; Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson, former director of the WRNS, 88; Mr David Scott Cooper, solo singer, 55; Mark Todd, 62; Air Vice-Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Central Europe, 79; Mr Michael Kerr, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 76; Professor James Lister, paediatrician, 74; Mr Miles Read, disc jockey, 46; Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson, former director of the WRNS, 88; Mr David Scott Cooper, solo singer, 55; Mark Todd, 62; Air Vice-Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Central Europe, 79; Mr Michael Kerr, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 76; Professor James Lister, paediatrician, 74; Mr Miles Read, disc jockey, 46; Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson, former director of the WRNS, 88; Mr David Scott Cooper, solo singer, 55; Mark Todd, 62; Air Vice-Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Central Europe, 79; Mr Michael Kerr, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 76; Professor James Lister, paediatrician, 74; Mr Miles Read, disc jockey, 46; Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson, former director of the WRNS, 88; Mr David Scott Cooper, solo singer, 55; Mark Todd, 62; Air Vice-Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Central Europe, 79; Mr Michael Kerr, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 76; Professor James Lister, paediatrician, 74; Mr Miles Read, disc jockey, 46; Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson, former director of the WRNS, 8

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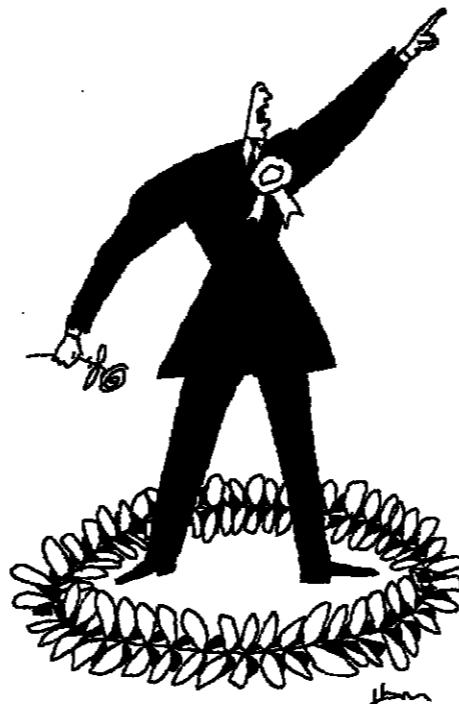
# It's time for Labour to loosen its tongue

In the thesaurus you soon get from "mountain" – what the Tories have now to climb to get anywhere near winning the election – to "bluff", what that party's spinners and spokespeople are going to be doing a lot of this weekend. Imagine you are huddling in a Central Office committee room. What are your options as you confront the by-election's arithmetic of voting shares and turn-out? You could go for broke, unseat your Prime Minister and make a fresh start (though it is hard to see where the proverbial men in suits could be found, and what they would do if John Major rounded on them with one of his favourite expletives). But even if you replaced the leader, you would still face the intractability of the Tories' problem Europe. What is the point of a new leader unless he also offers a fresh start on Europe?

Stage right, voices urge that the Tories' electoral mountain would be so much easier to climb carrying the Union flag. Like an ex-smoker who can see the packet on the shelf, the Tory party has been eyeing the nationalist option. It admires the wrapping, even counts the cigarettes, but, so far, has resisted lighting up. With good reason, Euro-scepticism would swiftly give way to outright rejection of union with the rest of

Europe. To whoops of delight from the Murdoch press, Sir James Goldsmith would find his clothes rifled. The Tories would lose their Chancellor and provoke a jurid split in their parliamentary ranks. For what? The idea that Europe can be turned, at this stage, into an election winner – a phantasm. There is no winning "independence" margin out there in the geopolitical thickets. No, anti-Europe sounds like a suicide letter read out at an inquest, not an election victory strategy. The Tories will some day have to face the European battle in their own ranks, but not yet. Opposition – powerlessness – is the place for settling scores and refining new identities. The party's best bet is to soldier on. It is a national interest, too. Whatever happens to single money, whatever reshaping occurs to and within the European Union, Britain's future is "European", and no political formation contending for parliamentary power can be anything else.

Labour, cowed in its self-control, was quick yesterday to present itself as anything but complacent. Its spokesmen are well-schooled in their humility. That is genuinely not the risk facing Labour. The risk, rather, is that voters will be deprived of a proper election campaign. Labour understandably wants to avoid putting a foot wrong. Garri-



ous John Prescott could give lessons to the Cosa Nostra these days. For team manager Tony Blair, the tactic is definitely *catenaccio*. But the overwhelming victory in the Wirral, on top of a huge opinion-poll lead, suggests that Labour's election strategists do not need to be so transfixed by their 1992 horror. Of course, there are lessons from previous defeat. It is clearly sensible to steer Tony Blair a million miles away from a Sheffield rally of the kind that so embarrassed Neil Kinnock. But fear of talking itself into danger may now risk Labour talking too little. Commandable determination to avoid making promises to the electorate that cannot be delivered could end up with a failure to communicate with the electorate at all.

This is not about posters and soundbites or the instant rebuttals and "clarifications" that Labour – all credit to the professionalism of its operation – has turned into a fine art. Nor is it about presenting bills of fare and inviting the electorate to tick its heart's desire. The paradox is that Tony Blair and his party are now so far ahead that they can afford to have a frank and open conversation with voters. Indeed, they would benefit by doing so, and so would our democracy.

This huge lead could be an excuse for Mr Blair and his colleagues to slam down the

hatches, dive dive dive, order battle silence, and then surface to celebrate watching the whole Tory fleet go down around them. But what about the rest of us? We want – need – to know what Labour intends in power. Instead of clamping up, Labour should open up – use its advantage to prepare us for Blair's Britain. Warn us about the difficulties that lie ahead. Invite us to understand the harder choices that must be made. Voters will, if anything, feel flattered at not being taken for granted. And they will be less shocked when Labour in power turns out to have a new and unexpected face. Good government will mean educating people about how much can be afforded, and what a government can accomplish, over how long.

Labour should behave like an agent who has won the contract, but needs to show how keen she is to close the sale. Voters are clearly saying they want a change. But government is not just about laying out a pitch, making sure to keep your tie straight and never saying anything except the obvious. It is about re-educating a country in Labour's view of the potential for change. Wirral South means Labour can anticipate government with some confidence. It shows that Labour has done enough to get elected. Enough, however, is not enough.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Nato is breaking Major's 'informal' promise to the Russians

Sir: Dr Durbin of St Edmund Hall, Oxford (letter, 24 February) mistakes the occasion and character of the West's undertaking not to advance Nato eastwards.

It was during discussions about the reunification of Germany, by John Major as Foreign Secretary and James Baker as US Secretary of State. Unfortunately for the Russians

it was made "informally", not written down or recorded in any subsequent *aide-mémoire*, let alone treaty, and therefore neither the British nor the American government consider themselves bound by it.

I put down a question in the House of Lords about this, after Russian officials had begun complaining about it – including Mr Gorbachev in

London last year – and the answer came from the Foreign Office that there was no "formal undertaking". There was no denial of the informal undertaking, of which the Russians apparently produced a rather confused tape.

That the Russians should have thought an Englishman's – or an American's – word might still be his

bond showed naivety and a lack of diplomatic professionalism. All the same, there is a sense of betrayal, and it is no wonder they are not too keen now on any simple "political charter" with Nato which might turn out no more binding than this other "political" undertaking.

LORD KENNETH  
House of Lords



Man at arms: Lord Armstrong (right foreground) during the visit of the US general Ulysses S Grant (fifth from left) to Armstrong's Elswick works, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in 1877. In the background is a 100-ton muzzle-loading 17.2-inch gun

Photograph: Vickers Defence Systems

Sir: Stephen Goodwin reports (22 February) that W G Armstrong was "suspected of pirating" the Victorian gun barrel design of Captain Alexander Blakely. This "tale of murky dealing in the arms trade" seems more appropriate to a Tod Slaughter melodrama than to historical fact.

Armstrong addressed the problem of artillery design at the request of the Duke of Newcastle, Minister of War, in December 1854. This was because of the poor performance of the almost medieval British field guns during the Crimean War. Armstrong, aged 44, had already achieved fame because of his interventions in the field of hydraulics and for his researches into static electricity. By 1858, Armstrong had produced

– and proven in trials against six rival designs – a revolutionary field artillery system, the notable features of which were breech loading, polygonal rifling and elongated, fused projectiles. The metallurgy was important, and Armstrong undertook much research into the technology of barrel construction. Essentially, he adopted a steel liner on to which were shrunk layers of wrought iron: a technique already well established in the manufacture of small-calibre guns.

Mr Goodwin reports that Blakely's claims were refuted by Armstrong's family. However, Armstrong was aged only 58, with 32 more years to live; when Blakely died, so he would

have responded to claims of a scandal in person. I went through all his many surviving papers and correspondence before producing a biography in 1983. There is no evidence that he secretly borrowed Blakely's ideas.

Armstrong's patents covered more than just barrel construction. By giving them to the government, he lost substantially, since the government set up its own establishment to make guns to his design. His order book dried up immediately and the ordnance part of his business survived only through exports.

LIZ CLEGG  
Arms Trade Programme Co-ordinator  
SafeWorld  
London WC1

Sir: The contention that arms sales enable Britain to "punch above its weight in diplomacy" ignores the reality of the contemporary global arms market ("British lion claws a king-sized stake in the world's arms bazaar", 26 February). The increasingly competitive scramble for defence contracts in the post-Cold War era has made the world's arms bazaar a buyer's, rather than a seller's market. Importers are not only able to arrange favourable economic agreements; they can also exert political leverage, so eager are the exporting nations to retain contracts in the shrinking global market.

PETER MASKENS  
Homechurch, Essex

Sir: Derbyshire well-dressing still continues, and involves production of mosaic pictures inlaid on moist clay with flower petals, leaves and other natural materials. Another surviving English folk art, also ephemeral, is the "sanding" of streets in Knutsford, Cheshire on Royal May Day. This involves men with bags of dyed sand creating motifs and patterns on the ground.

ALEXANDER CHASLO  
Manchester

### Send down the clones

Sir: Fay Weldon's suggestion, cited by Andrew Marr ("Galileo, Copernicus and now Dolly", 26 February), that the great and the good should one day be rewarded with cloning permits, leads me to hope that the long-running "nature versus nurture" debate may one day be ended by the spectacle of a eminent judge being obliged to send to prison, for numerous crimes, a delinquent young clone of himself.

SIMON DAY  
Bristol

Sir: Any engineer will tell you that it is (relatively) easy to design a product such as an aircraft or a computer program that will do what it is intended to do. It is much more difficult to ensure that it doesn't do what it is not intended to do.

By all means clone living creatures, but just because one sheep has been successfully test-flown does not mean that some future cloned experiments will not lead to catastrophic crashes. Professor CHARLES HUGHES  
Felsthorpe, Suffolk

Sir: Human cloning would eliminate the need for men, but not for women. Would this be a good thing?

ROBERT A SANDOW  
London W4

### Living folk arts of England

Sir: The belief that canal boat art is the only surviving indigenous folk art in England is erroneous (report, 21 February). The "dressing" of crooks, cleeks and market sticks with ramshorn, heated, pressed and carved, has been practised for many generations.

Ramshorn has been used in many countries for providing the hook at the top of the shepherd's crook but in England the farms were large enough to support a full-time shepherd. The long winter evenings gave time for the shepherd slowly to compress and bend the horn into shape, over the tall "chimney" oil lamp. Carving the horn into animal shapes followed.

There are about a thousand members of the British Stickmakers Guild, who, during the summer months at agricultural fairs, hold "best stick" competitions. Mercifully, the art world and academia have taken little notice of this craft, practised by the untutored and unconscious in garden sheds and barns.

PETER MASKENS  
Homechurch, Essex

Sir: Derbyshire well-dressing still continues, and involves production of mosaic pictures inlaid on moist clay with flower petals, leaves and other natural materials. Another surviving English folk art, also ephemeral, is the "sanding" of streets in Knutsford, Cheshire on Royal May Day. This involves men with bags of dyed sand creating motifs and patterns on the ground.

ALEXANDER CHASLO  
Manchester

### LETTER from THE EDITOR

Here is a minor dilemma of the kind that faces all newspapers. On Thursday evening, we "knew" the result of the Wirral by-election. Opinion polling can be wrong, but for the Conservatives to have held the seat, the polls would have had to have been wildly, extraordinarily, massively wrong. All the ordinary evidence, culled from weeks of reporting, canvassing and analysing, would have had to have been equally out. We also knew that our early pre-result editions would be read by people who had heard figures on radio or television.

So the dilemma was this: did we run a story saying "Labour wins Wirral", which was true (but not yet); or one saying "Labour hopes to win Wirral", which would have been safe, but would have looked unbearably wet and ignorant the next morning?

After heated discussion, we went for "New Labour wins home", above a picture of the cheery candidate and his wife in the back of their car. Clear enough. But what if the polls were wrong, went the cry. Well, said the sub-editor, we could always say it meant "New Labour wins home ... to London to work out what went wrong in the Wirral by-election." This ranks as the least convincing journalistic alibi I heard in the office this year.

Why do all newspapers, including this one, have a slightly flattened, smudgy look? Knowing people tell me it's the "bundler", the print site machine which parcels papers up. This week I went to our Watford print site to see *The Independent* thunder through the presses. I was struck by the glossy, pin-sharp freshness of the colour and words when they first emerged, slightly damp and warm, smelling to an editor's nose, better than new bread. So what happens? The bundler, harmless looking creature, is not the culprit. It is simply that the papers are stacked in lorries for hours, and the weight presses down on the colour and print. They look flattened because they have been. I just thought you'd like to know.

One of the odder, but more enjoyable meetings of the week was breakfast with the Serbian you. I vote for Milosevic. When Vuk asked why, the businessman nervously but firmly replied: "I will not vote for you – until you are elected."

At a television company included a short discussion about cloning and medicine. Another guest was Ken Livingstone, who worked as a theatre assistant in a London hospital in the Sixties. He told a chilling story. Apparently, back then, a high proportion of people who had open heart surgery mysteriously died during the operation. Eventually, an American doctor queried whether it was entirely sensible to use the eight to 10 pints of blood needed for the operation straight from the fridge. The global medical equivalent of a stunned silence followed. Across the world, patients had simply been chilled to death. One hospital started warming the blood, the death rate fell dramatically. Never let it be said that this column fails to find something to brighten your Saturday morning.

Andrew Marr

### QUOTE UNQUOTE

At the roots of his hostility to her [Margaret Thatcher] is a macho streak which sees only a subservient role for women, however talented, and a resentment that a woman achieved the supreme office which he coveted and which was denied him – Lord Tebbit, on the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine

The voters did not just vote against a discredited Tory government, they voted for New Labour – Ben Chapman, winner of the Wirral South by-election and the area's first Labour MP

Wouldn't you love to be cloned? I think I would. This has nothing to do with vanity, with thinking the world would be a better place if there was another one of me going on after I'm dead. It is pure curiosity – Richard Dawkins, Professor of Public Understanding of Science at Oxford University

Low inflation is the product of sound Tory policies. You may be able to clone a sheep but you can't clone successful Chancellors – Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer

Britain has long adopted the ostrich position when it comes to teenage sex – Alison Hadley, national policy officer of Brook Advisory Centres

The English aristocracy is now only the middle class with knobs on – Vivienne Westwood, designer

### British guilt over the Benin bronzes

Sir: Thomas Sutcliffe (article, 27 February) suggests that the restitution of another country's cultural treasures "should not be decided by reasons of politics ... but by a free competition of reverence".

Where the Benin bronzes are concerned it is indeed the issue of "reverence" that exercises Africanists and the Nigerian government. Not only are the bronzes unique, but they are the finest example of casting in the "lost wax" technique anywhere in the world.

Sutcliffe then points out that they would have much less value in Lagos than they do here and that to send them to Lagos would be to "deplete their power". The bronzes were not taken from Lagos but from Benin City, capital of the once independent state of Benin. In that city stands a large, reverently maintained museum, many of its walls hung with photographs of the bronzes that adorn the walls of Western museums. A visit to Benin museum leaves any Western visitor with an overwhelming feeling of guilt and sadness.

NIGEL EVANS  
London W4

### Children from poor homes thrive at fee-paying schools

Sir: I hope the information Mr IM Perry imparts to his students is more accurate than the figures he quotes in his letter referring to the Assisted Places Scheme (26 February).

The current cost of the scheme, which helps academically able children from low-income families to attend independent schools, is an average annual household income of only £11,700, not £20,000. Next year, as the scheme expands, it will be £14,100. The doubling of the number of pupils in the scheme will be

achieved over several years if there is no change of government. Nor is this an "enormous state subsidy" to schools, which could fill their over-subscribed places with full fee-payers.

Underfunding of other parts of the education service should not be corrected by denying opportunity to tens of thousands of children from poor families.

DAVID WOODHEAD  
Independent Schools Information Service  
London SW1

indeed my God-given right to drive from London to Newcastle in the middle lane of the motorway. There's no point in ducking and weaving between groups of slower vehicles.

And if Mr Russell-Smith sat 500 yards behind me at 70mph we would all get there safely and at the maximum legal speed.

SOLDIERS  
London W3

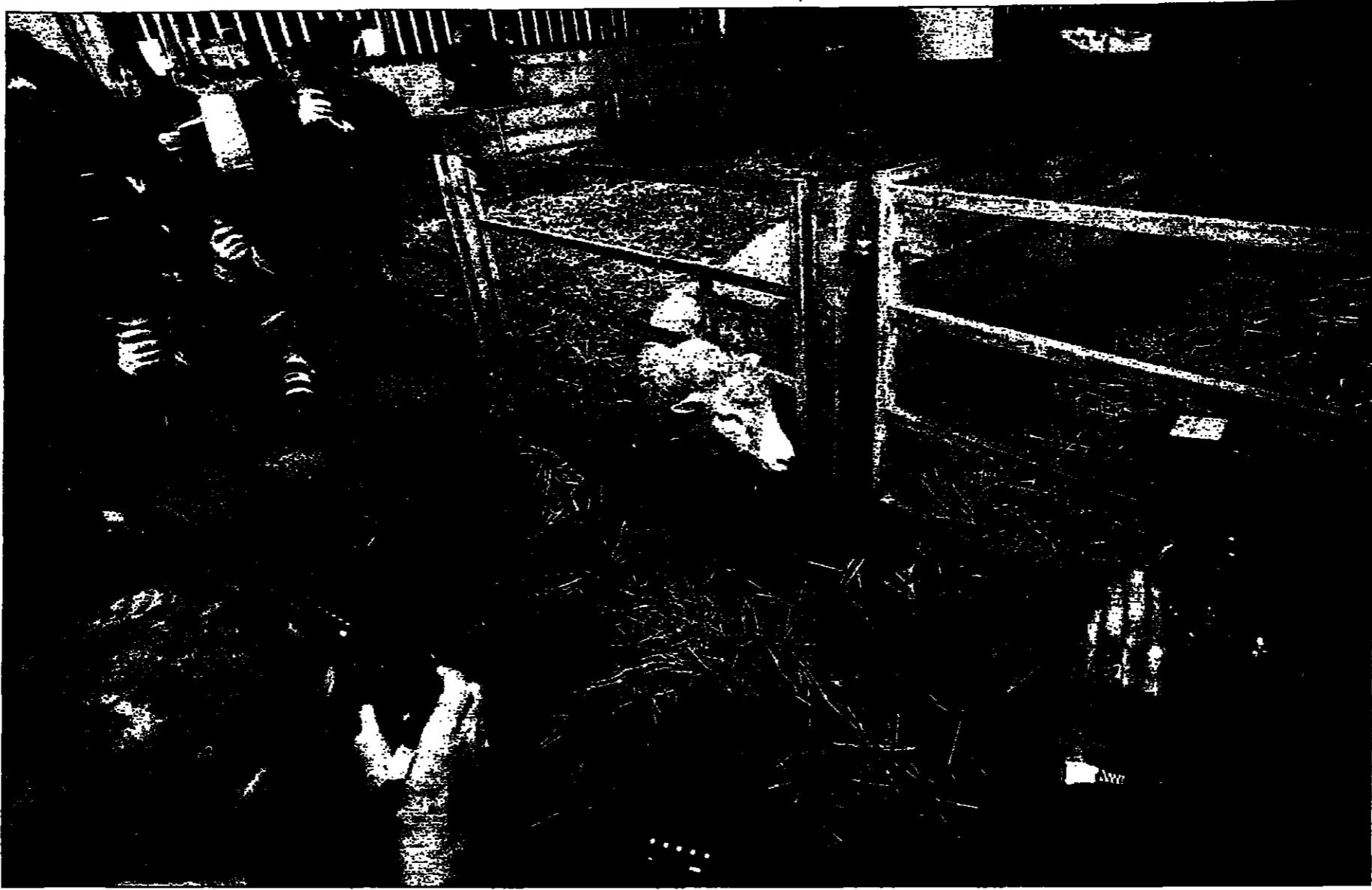
Sir: I may point out to P G Russell-Smith that if I maintain 70mph, it is

Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL (fax 0171-293 2856; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) and include a daytime telephone number.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

## the saturday story

Dolly the clone is the story of the decade, maybe even the century. Why? Because she embodies our greatest fears and hopes, says Peter Popham



The sheep of things to come: Dolly captivates the world's media at her first photo-call

Photograph: Jeremy Sutton-Hibbert

# The sheep that shook the world

**T**his was the week when, thanks to Dolly, the cloned sheep, the United States rediscovered William Blake. "Little lamb, who made thee? Dost thou know who made thee?" intoned the editorial column of the *Christian Science Monitor* solemnly.

In Dolly's case, of course, the answer was Dr Ian Wilmut of Roslin Laboratories near Edinburgh. Dolly's mild, myopic features nosed out of front pages across the world as, not for the first time and certainly not for the last, the whole planet went crazy.

Prominent columnists made the most dramatic comparisons. James K. Glassman in the *Washington Post* conducted his own one-man Dutch auction. "Dolly is the biggest story of the year, maybe of the decade, or even of the century," he enthused, thereby echoing the view of Joseph Rotblat, nuclear physicist and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, that Dolly's creation was equal in importance

to the building of the atom bomb.

It was a lot for a mere sheep to take on board. Along with Blake, innocence and the atom bomb, many of the 20th century's nastier ghosts rose from their tombs and clanked their chains. For although the idea of cloning in science fiction goes back almost a century, and only entered popular discourse after the publication of Alvin Toffler's *Future Shock* in 1970, the idea that man might – or must – control the quality of human breeding, and that human beings might be mass-produced for particular functions just like widgets in a factory, is one of our favourite nightmares.

Wells explored the idea in *The Time Machine*. Huxley in *Brave New World*, and large swathes of intellectual opinion in Britain and elsewhere backed the idea of practical eugenics in the 1920s and 1930s. Only after Hitler came to power and began to put the ideas into practice for the creation of a master race did everyone realise that the whole

idea stank. Eugenics remains as solemn a taboo as antisemitism, which helps to explain why German reaction to Dolly's advent has on the whole been both bleak and forceful.

"Germans are extremely sensitive to this issue," Peter Benninghoff-Luehl, an expert in genetic engineering at the Konrad Adenauer Institute, said. "Because of our history, there would be near-unanimous outrage if anyone ever tried to clone a human." *Die Welt* agreed: "The cloning of human beings would fit precisely into Adolf Hitler's world view ... there is no doubt that he would have used this technology intensively if it had been available at that time. Thank God it wasn't."

The peculiarity about the Dolly bombshell, as the German reaction shows, is the degree to which the world was ready for it. To the great mass of people outside secretive scientific circles, the atomic bomb, even as it burst over Hiroshima, was a profound and terrifying mystery. Besides feeling terror and shock (and gratitude), no-one knew what

to think for weeks and months afterwards.

In the case of cloning, however, the first shoe dropped way back in the 1960s, with the cloning of plants. We've had the best part of 40 years to get our responses ready. "It's unbelievable," raved Lee Silver, a biology professor at Princeton University, for whom the announcement came just in time for a rewriting of the first chapter of his forthcoming book. "It basically means there are no limits. It means that all science-fiction is true. They said it could never be done, and now here it is, done before 2000." Scientists were astonished and the rest of us had our joke-books to hand.

The Munich newspaper *Abendzeitung*, bucking the solemn German response, printed five identical pictures of Chancellor Helmut Kohl over a front-page banner headline reading "Genetic researchers say they could now clone Kohl." Other lucky candidates for cloning swam rapidly into view elsewhere. "Imagine five Michael Jordans playing five other Michael Jordans," invited syndicated Washington DC columnist George F. Will. Others soon raised the point that, as the *Washington Post* editorialised, "The people likeliest to succumb to the temptation are just the people one least wants to have around in perpetuity." In other words, the megalomaniacs, the narcissists, and all those people willing to cough up

\$120,000 to have themselves frozen throughout eternity on the off-chance of something turning up. If it is these people rather than the meek who are going to inherit the earth, perhaps the German paper *Hart des Volkes* was right to rumble out the warning. "With the cloning of an adult creature, humans can put an end to evolution."

The fantasies about cloning,

whether about happy me-clones

or awesome Jordan clones or

teased and titillated us with its horrors and charms.

Just a month ago, the notion

was revived in a new form in the *Independent on Sunday* in an essay by Tom Wolfe introducing the ideas of the American sociobiologist Edward O Wilson, who, attempting to clutch the age-old nature versus nurture argument decisively in favour of nature, has stated that the human being is not born a *tabula rasa* waiting to be filled by

ing in your life, including the fat content of your body, that is not genetically predetermined."

That is the cultural context

into which Dolly, in her flawed innocence, has crash landed. Wolfe sees a culture-bracing itself for the imminent announcement not only that the soul is dead, but that it never existed.

"Exposed negatives

waiting to be slipped into the developing fluid of experience"

is all we have a right to imagine ourselves to be. Scientists will in time reproduce us as readily as chocolate bars, and the resulting clones will have as little connection as a chocolate to anything beyond the contingencies of existence. All the illusions which have nurtured our civilisation will by then have burned away (leaving us, Wolfe implies, hopelessly floundering).

Perhaps this hysterical junc-

ture is a proper moment to stop and assess – for once again, the apocalyptic and the rapidly optimistic have hitched themselves to our wagon and are dragging us deep into a sci-fi horror future.

For one thing, the intensely

loaded word "clones" might usefully be replaced by the phrase "identical twin". As a correspondent pointed out, identical twins, like clones, share all their DNA; and identical twins (but not clones like Dolly) also share nine months of incomparable intimacy inside the womb. Identical twins can of course be hard to

be happy and some are not."

Wolfe sees this decisive shift

of the debate in favour of the

nature tendency gathering force

as the millennium approaches.

"Today ... barely three years

before the end of the millen-

ium, if your appetite for news-

papers, magazines and television

is big enough, you will quickly get

the impression that there is noth-

ing

else



# business & city

Business news desk: tel 0171-298 2636 fax 0171-298 2098  
BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

## Trader suspended as NatWest takes £50m hit

**Tom Stevenson  
and John Willcock**

NatWest stunned the City late last night with a warning that its first-half profits would take a £50m hit to cover serious "mispricing errors" on the interest rate options book run by its investment banking arm, NatWest Markets. The announcement came only days after the bank accompanied full-year results with the promise that its derivatives business was "tightly controlled".

NatWest declined to elaborate

on a terse statement that read: "As a result of its internal checking procedures NatWest Markets has discovered mispricing errors in its interest rate options book. A senior trader has been suspended for failure to supervise, pending the conclusion of an internal inquiry."

NatWest said it had already made a report to the Securities and Futures Authority (SFA) about another trader, who is understood to have carried out the mispricing to balance his position in a manner similar to the

attempt by Nick Leeson, the rogue trader who brought down Barings, to unwind previous trading errors. He has subsequently left the firm.

It is thought the suspended employee was the rogue trader's supervisor who would have been expected to notice irregularities of this sort. He would remain suspended, NatWest said, until an internal inquiry had been conducted into the events leading to the £50m hit.

One trader familiar with the interest rate options market said it would be relatively easy

to inflate profits by £50m and it was not thought that the problem necessarily pointed to more systematic fraud.

NatWest's shares are certain to come under pressure on Monday thanks to the timing of the announcement just after the market closed yesterday. Traders were speculating on a fall of at least 20p on yesterday's close of 758.5p.

Only three days ago, when NatWest announced profits of £1.2bn for 1996, down from £1.75bn, it made no mention of problems in its investment

banking arm. It did, however, point to a sharp rise in the staff costs from £510m to £725m.

Martin Owen, chief executive of NatWest Markets, said the higher figure reflected the costs of acquisitions but the coincidence of the rise with yesterday's announcement is sure to focus attention on the risks to financial institutions of staff whose pay packages are highly geared to performance-related bonuses.

The Bank of England is expected to draw attention to the dangers of the City's culture of

high bonuses when it issues a discussion paper on Monday on "Remuneration and Risk". It will say: "Many employees in the financial sector receive a significant part of their income in the form of profit-related bonuses. They therefore have a personal stake in the outcome of the activities they carry out on behalf of their employer. If these employees have significant discretion, then a firm's overall risk profile may be influenced by its employees' attitudes to risk."

The Bank's comments follow a diatribe earlier this week by

Donald Gordon, chairman of financial services group Liberty International, in which he warned of the risks inherent in "massive surge in over-incentivisation of personnel within the investment banking and capital market sectors. This has led to a number of financial accidents and will undoubtedly lead to more dramatic catastrophes".

A spokesman for the SFA said: "I can confirm that NatWest Markets have reported these matters to us and we are studying them."

NatWest's debacle follows several other spectacular scandals involving rogue traders. Leeson managed to sink Barings, Britain's oldest merchant bank, virtually single-handed when his unsupervised futures trading racked up losses of over £900m. Leeson is in jail in Singapore following a conviction for unauthorised trading.

Yasuo Hamamaka, Sunmoto's "Mr Copper", caused losses of over £1bn following years of unauthorised trading, during which he managed to manipulate the price of copper.

## Morgan Stanley UK chief pockets £4m

**David Usborne**  
New York

The Wall Street bonus bonanza, spawned by record profits earned in 1996, has crossed the water to London. Sir David Walker, a managing director at Morgan Stanley in the City, was paid no less than \$6.5m (£4m) last year according to filings made by the bank to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The information, submitted in connection with Morgan Stanley's planned merger with Dean Witter Discover, reveals that the bank paid three of its top officers more than \$10m each in 1996.

Sir David, who heads Morgan's European operations and is a former executive at the Bank of England, came in with the fourth biggest pay packet. Sir David began his career at the Treasury in 1961, and has held numerous other senior posts including being chairman of the Securities and Investments Board, chairman of Johnson Matthey Bankers, and deputy chairman of Lloyds Bank.

The filing offers rare official intelligence about the earnings of the top players on Wall Street last year. While New York has been buzzing for weeks about mega-bonuses, most banks have followed tradition in zipping up about the full extent of their generosity to their traders, analysts and investment bankers.

Filings from several other of the big institutions in coming weeks should, however, give additional glimpses into the sheer richness of last year's bonus haul. After a good year, it is not uncommon for top performers to receive lump bonus payments of up to eight times basic salary.

The package paid to Sir David, who oversees Morgan Stanley's European operations,

is likely to have been a mix of salary, a cash bonus and some restricted stock. He may not be able to realise the stock for several years. It none the less represents a doubling of what he was paid a year earlier.

The biggest winner at the firm was John Mack, 52, president of Morgan Stanley, who received \$10,677,489 for the year that ended 30 November – a 60 per cent increase on his earnings in 1995.

The package paid to Sir David, who oversees Morgan Stanley's European operations,

### Bonuses cut after Peter Young fiasco

Bonuses at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell are believed to have been cut by as much as 20 per cent, a result of the \$400m Peter Young fiasco last year and a sharp increase in staff numbers, writes Clifford German.

Although 1996 was a good year for most of the seven profit centres in the bank the bonus pool was reduced to take account of the activities of Mr Young.

The number of eligible individuals for bonuses also rose to more than 8,000 worldwide. Staffing numbers in London increased by several hundred to more than 3,000, reflecting the bank's expansion programme.

Biggest cuts in bonuses were in Morgan Grenfell Asset Management, the division which carried the can for Mr Young's losses.

The discretionary bonus system, though, did mean that some individuals received bigger cheques than in 1995. All staff are eligible, from secretaries who may get bonuses from four figures to senior managers whose entitlements will be measured in five and six figures.

One notable omission from the bonus payout list was Nicola Horlick, former head of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management's institutional arm, who forfeited her entitlement by resigning recently after a well-publicised bust-up with the management.



Wealthy on Wall Street: Sir David Walker, Morgan Stanley's head of European operations (above), registered the bank's fourth biggest pay packet, behind three of its top officers, who received more than \$10m each in 1996. The rare official intelligence of top players' Wall Street earnings was submitted in connection with Morgan's planned merger with Dean Witter Discover.

## Go-ahead axes 25% staff on Thames Trains

**Michael Harrison**

Another privatised rail operator yesterday announced plans for heavy staff cuts but pledged that the redundancies would not affect service levels.

Go-Ahead, the bus and rail group, is axing up to a quarter of the workforce in its Thames Trains franchise which operates between Paddington, Oxford, Windsor and Gatwick Airport.

The company, which also operates the Thameslink franchise, is taking a £5.8m charge to cover 200 to 250 redundancies among the 1,000-strong workforce at Thames Trains.

But Go-Ahead's managing director, Martin Ballinger, promised that the staff reductions would not bring about a repeat of the chaos seen on South West Trains after it was taken over as part of the rail privatisation programme.

Stagecoach, which won the franchise last year, is facing heavy fines after having to cancel 450 services a week because of a shortage of drivers. South West Trains shed 70 of its

670 drivers last month under a voluntary redundancy scheme.

Mr Ballinger said the redundancy programme at Thames Trains would be introduced progressively in a way that would not jeopardise services.

He was speaking as Go-Ahead reported a near doubling in pre-tax profits in the half-year to the end of December to £1.2m and plans to expand its bus operations into continental Europe. The group, which operates 20 per cent of all bus services in London, said it was looking particularly at France and Scandinavia for expansion.

Go-Ahead was partnered by the French transport group VIA-GTI in its bid for Thameslink and was involved in the bidding race for Sweden's Scania, the world's biggest bus operator, only to lose out to Stagecoach.

The group is also bidding to take on the Docklands Light Railway franchise in London's docklands as part of a strategy of strengthening further its presence in south-east England, the biggest public transport market in western Europe.

## Cathcart drives off with £2m from Avis

**Magnus Grimond**

Alun Cathcart, the chairman and chief executive of Avis Europe, is set to receive his second £1m windfall in the space of a decade from the flotation of Europe's largest car hire operator.

Yesterday the group announced the 108p to 126p a share price range for the group's stock market offering, its second in just over 10 years, which will value Avis at up to £734m, making it the biggest public offer this year.

Mr Cathcart made £2.2m before tax from the group's original stock market debut in 1986 and subsequent highly geared £900m sale in 1989 to a group that included D'Ieteren, Belgium's leading car importer, and General Motors.

The latest float will see him convert options into shares worth £2.37m at the 117p mid-range price. He is selling 60 per cent of his stake, which would raise £1.42m at the mid-price, mostly to cover tax liabilities, and is locked into the remaining holding for 12 months. In all, 62 managers will end up with a stake worth between £6.3m and £7.3m as a result of the conversion of options granted at the equivalent of 1p each.

Mr Cathcart promised yesterday he would not be coming back to the market a third time. "I can guarantee, after the last four weeks, I have done my best. Avis flotation. That I can guarantee," he said yesterday.

Ten per cent of the offer,

which will raise a net £237m at the mid-price, will be reserved for individual investors, who will be entitled to membership of the Avis Europe Founders' Club. This will make them eligible for perks such as free extra days on Avis rentals, a hot line to automatic reservations and discounts on hire rates.

Individuals will have to apply for their shares through intermediaries such as banks, stockbrokers and four share shops. But Mr Cathcart said UK retail

demand was running at "very high levels". The retail offer closes on 21 March, with trading due to begin on 4 April.

Avis is estimating that operating profits rose a fifth to £101m in the 12 months to the end of last month. Merrill Lynch, one of the brokers to the issue, is forecasting that profits will rise from £56.8m to £89.7m at the pre-tax level in the year to next February, putting a p/e ratio of between 12 and 13.5 on the indicative pricing range.

## Capital Corp delays results date

**John Willcock**

Capital Corporation, the casino group defending itself against a £191m hostile takeover bid from the London Clubs International (LCI), is postponing next Tuesday's scheduled announcement of 1996 results until the bidder produces a formal offer document.

"We intend to publish our defence document with our results, and we have 14 days to prepare the defence from the time we receive LCI's offer document," a Capital spokesman said yesterday.

LCI has three weeks from after making its bid before it has

to produce the offer document. Capital's shares closed down 6p at 205 yesterday while LCI added 0.5p to 379.

One analyst commented: "Capital's price is looking for a higher bid, perhaps with a bit of cash. It looks like a straight argument over price. Mercury Asset Management (MAM) owns 17 per cent in both companies, so they'll have a big say in it."

Capital's price was languishing at 155p before LCI's announcement, following a profit warning a month ago that profits would fall to around £8.75m in

from £13m. Capital incurred £3.5m costs due to closure of the Colony Club last year for a £6.5m refurbishment.

Capital, led by its chairman Gary Nesbit, has also suffered several embarrassments over the past year. Last summer half a dozen croupiers were fired and a customer banned from their casinos after a fixing ring was discovered. In another incident, Hambros, the company's advisers, called in accountants from Price Waterhouse to investigate discrepancies in Capital's wine purchases, going back before 1993, when the company floated.

## Iveco to close Langley factory

**Chris Godsmark**  
Business Correspondent

Iveco-Ford, the truck-making joint venture between Fiat and Ford, yesterday confirmed plans to close its historic Langley plant near Slough in Berkshire with the loss of 450 jobs.

Iveco said it took the move, another blow to the already shrinking British commercial vehicle industry, because of overcapacity in the European truck market.

Alan Fox, the chairman, said demand for medium-sized lorries had shrunk by 40 per cent in the past two years.

Production will shift to Brescia in Italy, a move the Transport and General Workers Union said amounted to "social dumping".

The union said it mirrored Ford's recent decision to shift long-term production of the best-selling Escort from its Halewood plant on Merseyside, involving the loss of about 1,300 jobs.

The Langley factory, built 90 years ago, was used to make Hawker Hurricane fighters during the 1930s and 1940s and started producing trucks 35 years ago. Workers build the Cango truck, which last year took 20 per cent of the UK commercial vehicle market, making it Britain's best-selling lorry.

Ford sold its UK truck-building operations to Iveco in 1986.

Production at the site has been declining for several years. In 1996 it made just 7,677 cars, of which a fifth were exported; compared with a full production capacity of about 20,000 vehicles. In its best year, 1993, it managed to make fewer than 17,000 trucks.

Another factor in Iveco's decision is likely to be the value of the 65-acre Langley site, which Ford owns and could sell for more than £25m, depending on whether the local council grants planning permission.

The news came as Renault's troubled French car giant announced plans to close its factory in Belgium. Renault said the move would cut its costs by Fr530m (£29m) a year in the face of a huge drop in French car sales. However, the one-off cost of closing the plant would total Fr12m, Renault warned.

Demand for cars has slumped after France ended a scheme to subsidise private buyers willing to scrappage old models. Renault and the privately owned Peugeot group are main annual in sellers in France, half their production in their home market.

Workers at the Belgian plant were said to be planning to strike on Monday.

STOCK MARKETS									
FTSE 100		Dow Jones*		Nikkei		F M T W T		F T A I W T	
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	Yield(%)			
FTSE 100	4339.20	+9.90	+0.2	4357.40	3632.30	3.65			
FTSE 250	4663.00	+2.30	+0.0	4665.00	4015.30	3.37			
FTSE 350	2146.90	+4.10	+0.2	2150.60	1816.50	3.59			
FT Small Cap	2356.22	+2.87	+0.1	2356.22	1954.06	2.90			
FT All Share	2119.74	+3.9							



JEREMY WARNER

At best, Gordon Brown is going to be regarded by financial markets as an unknown quantity, at worst a Labour chancellor of the old school, willing to play fast and loose with the economy to advance the Party's social priorities'

## An independent Bank is Labour's litmus test

The conversion of Labour to the cause of sound public finances and low inflation reached a point of no return this week with the announcement by Gordon Brown, the shadow chancellor, of an inflation target of 2.5 per cent and new monetary arrangements to back it up. With this statement, Labour seems to have been both baptised and confirmed into the faith all at the same time. Or has it?

What Labour says it will do and what it will actually do when in government are likely to be two very different things. Belief in the new religion is one thing, being a good Christian quite another.

On one level, Labour's refusal to contemplate giving the Bank of England immediate independence in the determination of monetary policy is an entirely practical piece of decision making. To do so would require legislation, and that's going to take a minimum of a year to enact. So even if Mr Brown did not believe the Bank had to "earn" its independence with a period of good behaviour on probation, some kind of transitional arrangement would have to be put in place.

Even so, it is hard not to sense in Mr Brown's manoeuvrings a deeper purpose, for part of the intention of these arrangements is to achieve a situation where all risk of conflict between chancellor and Bank in the determination of policy is removed. Mr Brown calls it "depersonalising" the process

but there's actually a bit more to it than getting rid of the media ritual of the Ken and Eddie show. He wants to arrive at a point where the two sides he and the Bank are able to agree on policy in nearly all conceivable circumstances.

While this seems a reasonable enough ambition, the effect may well be a rather laxer monetary policy than would otherwise be the case. There is generally compromise and fudge behind the outward appearance of harmony and this setup seems like a formula for just that. In a non-adversarial system, the balance in policy will always be towards the soft option. At this early stage in Britain's attempt to establish credibility as a low inflation economy, is this really the right approach?

To claim that lax policy is actually Mr Brown's purpose here may be to exaggerate the argument, but this could well be the effect. The Bank will be required to set up a formal monetary policy committee to guide the Governor on his advice, which in turn will be half staffed by seconded outsiders. While technically these people will not be Labour placemen - the Court of the Bank of England will make the appointments - in practice they will be; in the real world the Bank is not going to opt for anyone Mr Brown doesn't approve of. It can be stated with some certainty, for instance, that Patrick Minford will not be on the short list.

The chancellor therefore maintains an effective right of veto.

The Bank has managed to win one important concession - that all these appointments will be established experts in the field of monetary policy. The powerful vested interests of organised capital and labour don't automatically get a seat at the table. Even so, it can readily be seen that the effect could easily be to dilute and homogenise the decision-making process.

And just in case the committee is still prone to err on the side of caution, notwithstanding the outsiders, the chancellor is proposing to bolster his position through the appointment of a powerful "council of economists" who will work to him at the Treasury. Should the two sides perchance disagree, there is not much that would have the upper hand.

Some of what Mr Brown proposes seems entirely reasonable, given the traditional suspicion with which financial markets hold Labour governments. Could Mr Brown get away with defying the Bank of England's advice, in the same way as Kenneth Clarke has? Certainly not in his first year or two. The markets would wreak a lasting revenge, even though Mr Brown, like Mr Clarke a couple of years ago, might with the passage of time be proved to have been right all along.

The truth of the matter is that, at best, Mr Brown is going to be regarded by financial

markets as an unknown quantity, at worst a Labour chancellor of the old school, quite willing to play fast and loose with the economy; if that is the price that has to be paid to advance the Party's social priorities. So in that sense Mr Brown is quite justified in setting himself up with a mechanism that allows him to exercise his judgement without having to pay a gaudy penalty for doing so.

But here's the rub. Mr Brown's judgement is all too likely to be of the variety that factors in a whole host of other criteria besides rigid adherence to the inflation target. Maintaining growth is one. Unemployment another. And, very pertinent at the moment, a third might be the exchange rate.

I don't want to over egg the argument here for in many respects it is hard to fault what Mr Brown is proposing. Quite a bit of what I've been saying might seem unduly cynical and nit picking. But the claim that these arrangements are a significant advance on what went before, an evolutionary leap on the way to full independence for the Bank, is a very questionable one. Stripped of its rhetoric, what's proposed here is merely the old system in new clothing. The decision will remain the chancellor's; the rest is just a way of making those choices seem as credible as possible.

As for the insistence that the Bank needs

first to "earn" its independence, the shadow

chancellor is surely kidding, isn't he? Responsibility for the disastrous compromised nature of policy over the past 50 years lies not with the Bank but with successive generations of chancellors. Set against such a record, the Bank's error of judgement in advising on an interest rate hike two years ago when none proved necessary should scarcely register at all. That hasn't stopped it being constantly cited to support the case against independence. Since when has erring on the side of caution been an offence greater than that of recklessness? Yet that is what Mr Brown implies when he talks about the Bank having to earn its independence.

Mr Brown holds out the promise of independence, but will he actually deliver? Having already tied his hands so thoroughly on tax and spend, will he really want to surrender monetary policy as well? If Labour takes us into monetary union, it will have no option. Maastricht demands central bank independence, subservient to the even more distant independence of the European Central Bank. Mr Brown's scope for painting on the broader economic canvas would be more restricted than ever. The issues Mr Brown is grappling with over domestic monetary policy are magnified 10-times over in European monetary union. His failure fully to embrace independence for the Bank of England may be a harbinger of things to come on Europe too.

## Newcastle United looks to score £50m from float

Tom Stevenson  
City Editor

Newcastle United asked the City to pay for its £50m five-year spending spree yesterday, announcing a stock market flotation that will value the football club at between £172m and £193m. The float, which will raise £47.4m of new funds for the club, at least 10 per cent from the private investors who are currently flocking to invest in football clubs, has already been a bonanza for the company's directors.

Newcastle's prospectus showed the company's two joint chief executives and its finance director have shared more than £1m in one-off payments "in recognition of the part they have played in the recent development of Newcastle United".

Freddie Fletcher, the former commercial director of Glasgow Rangers and chief executive for the past five years, received £750,000 from Newcastle's major shareholder, north-east property magnate Sir John Hall. Mark Corbridge, the 33-year-old former Rothschild banker who is now joint chief executive pocketed £300,000 despite being with the club for less than

a year. Jo Dixon, finance director, was paid £100,000.

The directors are also to be paid guaranteed bonuses regardless of the performance of the club or company. Both chief executives will be paid basic salaries of £160,000, but have a bonus worth between 50 and 100 per cent of that figure written into their contracts.

Sir Terence Harrison, the former Rolls-Royce chief executive who was named as Newcastle's non-executive chairman yesterday, said the proceeds of the float would be used to pay off £21m of debt. A further £12m has been set aside to fund future investments on players already signed and to attract new ones. Newcastle's chairman, Alan Shearer, has agreed to contribute £100,000 to the float.

The company said yesterday the funds would not be used for a proposed new stadium, for which it is seeking planning permission. It did, however, put a price tag on the development of the stand, and the conversion of the existing St James' Park site into an indoor arena, of £90m. No details of where that money would come from were given.

The heavy costs of building and maintaining a top squad was spelled out in yesterday's prospectus. Newcastle made £29m from its four main income streams of gate receipts, television fees, sponsorship and the sale of branded products in the year to July last year. But that turnover was wiped out by operating expenses, mainly players' salaries, of £23.1m and transfer fees worth a massive £29.9m. This resulted in an operating loss of £24m and brought the aggregate operating loss for the past five years to £37.9m.

Mr Fletcher disputed the claim that investors might be concerned by the abrupt departure from his two previous jobs of Newcastle's manager Kenny Dalglish, who took over recently from Kevin Keegan. He attempted to reassure potential investors by saying Dalglish had



Bonanza winners: (from left) Directors Jo Dixon, Mark Corbridge and Freddie Fletcher

Photograph: Adrian Dennis

signed a three-and-a-half year contract and would be in receipt of unspecified share options. No players are to get options.

According to yesterday's prospectus, 40 million Newcastle shares will be issued at between 120p and 135p each, to raise

£51m before expenses. Assuming a price in the middle of that range the shares are being sold at 22.4 times earnings per share, as adjusted for transfer fees and other exceptional items. The company said it would have paid a dividend of 1.6p a share

had it been listed for the whole of the year to July 1997.

The retail offer closes on 20 March. The institutional bookbuilding process ends the following day with pricing to be announced on 4 March and dealing due to start on 2 April.

### IN BRIEF

• A Treasury-backed Bill giving building societies extra powers and limited protection against hostile takeovers was yesterday brought before Parliament, ending months of doubt as to whether it would be introduced. The Building Societies Bill seeks to remove restrictions on societies' commercial activities, allowing them to offer a wider range of financial services. Societies will now be able to make up to 25 per cent of loans that are not fully secured on residential property. Until now, only a tiny proportion could be for anything other than mortgages. The Bill will also strip the five-year protection against takeover from any demutualising society which is itself involved in a bid to take over another company.

• FKI is spending £21m on reorganising its electrical engineering division which includes the Hawker Siddeley Electric Power group and Marelli Motors. The company said the reorganisation was made to "take advantage of their combined strengths". It said the impact of the recent strength of sterling on overseas earnings had been largely balanced by a relatively strong US market.

• Richards, the specialist engineering group, warned that its profit margins in the UK were being eroded by the continuing strength of sterling and as a result it had to put its Northern Ireland spinning plants on short-time working. The warning, which came at the annual general meeting, was blamed on the near 20 per cent appreciation of sterling against the Belgian franc.

• Cambridge Antibody Technology yesterday announced plans to raise £35m in the latest of a growing stream of stock market flotation in the biotechnology sector. The company, which was started in the hands of joint founder and chief executive David Chiswell, has developed what it claims is technology for isolating human monoclonal antibodies, used both in making drugs and in screening other compounds to test their suitability as drugs. The group is expected to be capitalised at around £50m by the mainly institutional placing, with dealings due to start on 25 March.

• China had a 1996 trade surplus with the US of \$10.54bn (£6.5bn). The *China Daily* reported, quoting a customs report. The report said total trade between the two countries in 1996 rose 4.9 per cent year-on-year to \$42.84bn. Exports to the US last year totalled \$26.7bn, up 7.9 per cent, while US imports totalled \$16.2bn, up 0.2 per cent. However, according to US data, America's US trade deficit with China was \$3.95bn last year.

• SmithKline Beecham has convinced a key panel of the US Food and Drug Administration to recommend approval of its Coreg heart treatment for sale in the US. Last May, the panel refused to approve the drug, saying it needed more information from the British drugs group.

## BA backs plans for 600-seat aircraft

Michael Harrison

British Airways yesterday gave its backing to the launch of a new generation of super jumbo jets, forecasting that 600-seat aircraft would be flying in significant numbers early in the next century.

In evidence to the Heathrow Terminal 5 planning inquiry, BA's chief executive, Bob Ayling, said the airline remained committed to introducing larger and more cost-efficient aircraft.

"We believe there is a need for such aircraft to be introduced in the early years of the next decade. In our opinion, whilst the phasing of fleet plans in the short term may be reassessed, there is no basis for assuming that larger aircraft, including 600-seaters, will not be flying in significant numbers by the time Terminal 5 is fully operational," said Mr Ayling.

His comments follow Boeing's decision to shelf the \$7bn (£4.3bn) development of a 550-seat successor to the 747 jumbo jet and remarks earlier this week by British Aerospace, one of the partners in Airbus, casting doubt on how committed the European aircraft consortium was to launching its own super jumbo, code-named A3XX.

Ironically, it was BA's decision not to be a launch customer for the planned Boeing 747-600X which ultimately forced the US aircraft manufacturer to abandon the project.

However, Mr Ayling said that BA's long-term predictions were "unaffected" by Boeing's decision, indicating that it remained keen on adding super-jumbos to its fleet.

## House shortage forces up prices

Diane Coyle  
Economics Editor

House prices were boosted by a shortage of properties for sale last month, Nationwide Building Society reported yesterday. Prices have now climbed 10 per cent from their trough in 1995.

The increase in Nationwide's index was 0.7 per cent in February, about the same as the recent monthly average.

That took them to a level 8.5 per cent higher than a year earlier.

The average house price in the UK reached £25,621, according to Nationwide, up from £21,256 a year earlier.

House price inflation has

now been running at above 8 per cent for four months, although the building society is forecasting a rise of 7 per cent for 1997 as a whole.

Paul Sanderson, head of research, said: "Survey evidence still strongly suggests shortages of property for sale remain a problem in many areas, causing upward pressure on prices in certain areas of the market and frustrating many potential buyers."

These shortages, rather than weaker demand or uncertainty ahead of the general election, probably explained why there had been tentative signs of a slowdown in housing market activity, he said.

The average house price in

the UK has risen by 10.4 per cent since January 1995.

It is the first time since 1989 that house price inflation has been above 8 per cent for four consecutive months.

Mr Sanderson said: "The recent rise in house prices is the result of a combination of factors, including

strong economic growth and low interest rates.

There is also a shortage of

available houses for sale, particularly in the more expensive parts of the market.

Mr Sanderson added: "The recent rise in house prices is the result of a combination of factors, including strong economic growth and low interest rates.

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There is also a shortage of available houses for sale, particularly in the more expensive parts of the market.

## ScotAm confirms three firm bids

Clifford German

Scottish Amicable, the Stirling-based mutual insurance group said it had received just three firm bids, from Abbey National, the Prudential and AMP, by the deadline of noon yesterday.

There will now be two weeks of secret bilateral bargaining between the bidders, the ScotAm management and their financial advisers SG Warburg. ScotAm will then take a further two weeks before recommending the winning bid to policy-holders.

The Prudential's last public statement on its offer promised £400m in cash and £400m in bonuses for policyholders, plus a loan of £1.1bn from the Prud's life fund in the ScotAm fund. Prudential also promises to make ScotAm the focus of its operations, selling policies through independent financial advisers beginning in 1999 continued to its ultimate value of

fall, and Italy bore the brunt of the market reaction. Italian futures contracts ended 2.29 points down at 127.50. Spanish, Swedish, Finnish and Irish government bonds softened too.

Jitters that a single currency might be delayed resulted in dealers selling Italian bonds and buying German debt instead. There were repercussions for bonds and currencies across Europe.

Traders said the Bank of Italy and the Bank of Spain both intervened when the currency rate reached 99.80 lire to the mark. The currency fell during the day through the psychological barrier of 1,000 lire per mark to reach 1,001.50, its lowest level since it rejoined the ERM at a central parity of 990 lire on 25 November last year.

Some dealers suggested that the rumours were begun by traders in an attempt to get the markets moving. But jitters were also fuelled by Bundesbank board member Peter Schmidhuber, who said yesterday morning that "hectic" attempts to meet the deficit criteria were causing only

the appearance of convergence.

Rumours that the Bundesbank

was considering a rate cut were denied by the central bank.

Abbey National's offer was

also fuelled by the fact that it has

been the most active bidder in the

market for the last few months.

SG Warburg's offer was

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## sport

# Manifesto of a Coke can rebel

**Joanne Muggeridge has shocked the badminton world. Nick Duxbury reports**

**W**e've all wanted to do it at some stage and next to biting the boss, pouring a cold, sticky liquid over his head has its merits when the red mist of frustration takes hold.

Joanne Muggeridge, the badminton player once sponsored by the equipment company Headstrong, employed the real thing in a way Coca-Cola would not approve of to end abruptly a meeting with the England manager, Steve Baddeley, in his Milton Keynes office. The incident eight days ago has passed into sporting folklore, but the 27-year-old Muggeridge, having spectacularly thrown open the door, marked "Bad Girl of British Badminton", is eager to slam it shut just as quickly. However, it may take time.

All Muggeridge, a double Commonwealth Games gold medal winner and twice an Olympian, wants to do is play for England. Baddeley wants the best players in his squad and Muggeridge, at No 30, is Britain's highest-ranked woman singles player in the world. So why the spat?

For a start, the Catford-born professional was feeling the pinch, having been dropped from the elite 28-strong squad, who have their travel and hotel bills paid for by the Badminton Association of England. A trip to the forthcoming Swiss Open will set her back at least £500. Lottery cash is also about to be splashed

"I was just so frustrated. He

didn't move, or say anything. He was quite surprised," said Muggeridge, who, having also been given a letter which relieved her of "all responsibilities and obligations" to the squad, flounced off to Germany to get match practice for the All England Championships which start in Birmingham on Tuesday week.

The decision by Baddeley,

whose reflexes won him Commonwealth gold, to remain immobile was the correct one, according to Maryanne Henchy, the BAE spokeswoman. "He didn't react. It would have been a mistake if he had, but afterwards he was extremely upset," she said. On the question of Muggeridge's post-dunking image,



Dogged by controversy: Joanne Muggeridge, with Brontë, at home this week

Photograph: Robert Hallam

Henchy added: "Joanne is no more difficult to handle than some others, but she has her own views and is a very strong-minded person."

Few olive branches have been waved this week, but Baddeley has indicated that if Muggeridge allows her training to be monitored by the BAE and if there is an improvement in her fitness, she could be reinstated. "We are not doubting her ability," he said. "She could be in the world's top 20."

A few shreds continued with her response to a letter of support for the manager signed by 17 of the elite squad, including her England doubles partner, Julie Bradbury. The players

"wholeheartedly" backed Baddeley for demanding that Muggeridge plays in grand slam events, follows a strict training regime and does not play in the German Bundesliga when required to play in England. The letter went on: "We hope that Joanne will recognise her misjudgement and do her best to repair the situation, for she is a talented player who would like to see train hard and eventually fulfil her potential."

In the latest of almost daily faxed to national newspapers which have kept the bronx going, Muggeridge replied that in hindsight her "actions last weekend were capable of misinterpretation by my fellow

players and this I deeply regret."

She will play in the next grand slam at Redbridge in April whether or not she is reinstated, but the withdrawal of funding and support is so fundamental to my ability to compete at the highest level that I must continue to pursue the avenues of appeal open to me to remedy my present position."

Either on court, or off it,

Muggeridge is competitive – a trait she has inherited from her father and coach, Vic, a retired fireman who has twice been in trouble with the BAE for over-enthusiasm at matches. There is a divide between her and Baddeley, but at least his hair should be dry by now.

## Q UOTES OF THE WEEK

I'm 52 now and I don't want to be turning up at muddy training grounds for the rest of my life. Dave Bassett on his appointment as Nottingham Forest general manager.

Everyone can see it was nowhere near a penalty. The referee was only five yards away. It was just shocking, heart-breaker. Sandra Owen on the moment when the ball went out of Chelsea into the FA Cup sixth round. I feel a year older tonight. Ruud Gullit, Chelsea manager.

Christopher Vincent is the repository of treachery. He is a serpent – no creator of literature could have invented him. He either loves to hear it, hopes, hoping will do right by him. He might be a good man, but he is a terrible cheapskate. Roddy Kleinren, Bruce Grobbelaar's defence barrister, during the match-fixing trial, on the chief prosecution witness.

He told me to grow my hair long and I would get in the England side. I ask you, what sort of shit is that? Julian Stiles, West Ham, on meeting the England manager, John Lydon.

Short of sending a team of guys in balaclavas round with baseball bats, there's not a lot you can do to stop him. Jim Duffy, Hibernal manager, after defeat at Rangers, on Brian Laudrup.

I'm glad to be back. I must say I really liked the renovated pedestrian zone and the lines were slick. Jacky, from her home town, Kinsale, for the first time since she was three years old.

### TODAY

#### Football

Matches not on pools coupons: 3.0 unless stated

**FA CUMBERLAND TROPHY** Third round: Altrincham v Chorley; Accrington Stanley v Hyde; Colne v St Leonards; Stanhope & Green v Glazebrook; Gloucester v Runswick; Heybridge Swifts v Kidderminster Harriers; Morecambe v Dagenham; Nantwich v Shrewsbury Town; Northwich v Warrington.

**GRAND VALHALLA** Conference: Bromsgrove Rovers v Northwich Victoria; Dover v Southport; Gateshead v Hayes; Huddersfield v Telford; Kettering v Tamworth; Oldham v Grimsby; Peterborough v Stevenage; Shrewsbury Town v Tamworth; Padiham Rangers v Blackpool; Runcorn v Warrington; Scunthorpe United v Hartlepool; Stockport County v Notts County; Sutton United v Welling.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Second round: Bradford City v Fleetwood; Charlton v Walsall; Doncaster v Barnet; Grimsby Town v Chesterfield; Hartlepool United v Wrexham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wrexham; Notts County v Woking; Oldham v Dagenham and Southend; Shrewsbury Town v Welling.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Third round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Walsall; Colchester United v Woking; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Fourth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Colchester United v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Semi-final: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Final: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Fifth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Sixth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Seventh round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Eighth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Ninth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Tenth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Eleventh round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Twelfth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Thirteenth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Fourteenth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Fifteenth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Sixteenth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Seventeenth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Eighteenth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Nineteenth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Twentieth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Twenty-first round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Twenty-second round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Twenty-third round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Twenty-fourth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Twenty-fifth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Twenty-sixth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Twenty-seventh round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Twenty-eighth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Twenty-ninth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Tenth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

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**GRANDEUR CUP** Thirteenth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

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**GRANDEUR CUP** Seventeenth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Eighteenth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Wokingham; Doncaster v Wokingham; Hartlepool United v Wokingham; Leyton Orient v Wokingham; Morecambe v Wokingham; Notts County v Wokingham; Oldham v Wokingham; Shrewsbury Town v Wokingham; Wokingham v Wokingham.

**GRANDEUR CUP** Nineteenth round: Accrington Stanley v Wokingham; Bury v Woking

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# Rangitikei ready to ascend for Mann

## Racing

RICHARD EDMONDSON

For some still differing there will be clues this weekend about what to back at the Cheltenham Festival. National Hunt racing's *aison d'ire*. For the poor television viewer though there are seven moderate handicaps events which are the bookmakers' *aison d'ire*.

First the good stuff. The estimable Space Trucker has his final practice lap at Leopardstown tomorrow under the watchful eye of a course executive that may already be on for the Champion Hurdle. The management at the Dublin track have brought forward Space Trucker's event, the Bramcotswood Hurdle, so the poor wee lamb will have virgin territory into which to insert his valuable hooves.

The six-year-old is in single figures in some lists for the Champion Hurdle following

successes at Cheltenham and Newcastle which had the stop-watch anoraks throwing their bobble hats into the air. It might seem odd, therefore, that Jessica Harrington, Space Trucker's trainer, believes he will almost certainly get beaten tomorrow. The gelding is said to be in need of the run and will hardly delight in the soft going either.

In Britain the tarpaulin will be over the cameras at Newbury by the time Mr Mulligan, the Gold Cup prospect, completes his serious preparation with some work after racing. The nine-year-old, who was second in the Sun Alliance (Novices') Chase at the Festival last season, has not run since capsizing at Kempton's final fence when on course to finish runner-up to One Man in the King George VI Chase. "Tony [McCoy, the champion jockey] is coming here and will partner him over two miles round the course," Noel Chance, the chestnut's trainer, said yesterday.

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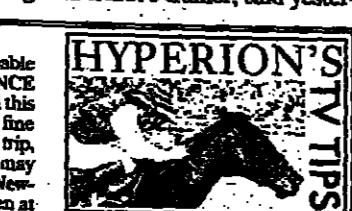
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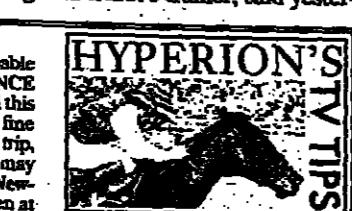
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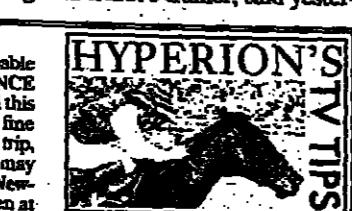
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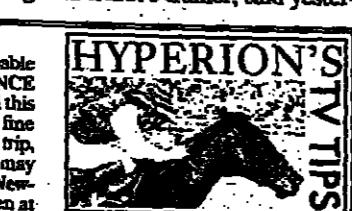
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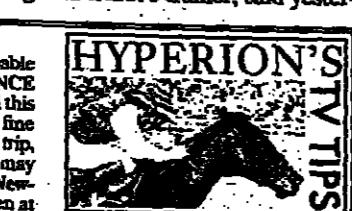
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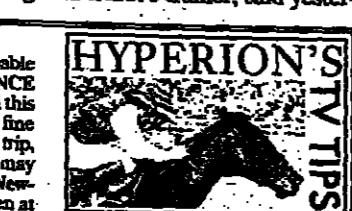
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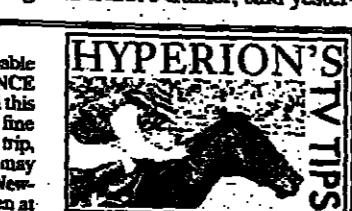
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2.15 SHERIFF

# Leonard turns into Big Daddy

For England's pack leader, the All Blacks of the late Eighties are the benchmark.

**Chris Hewett** met a genial hard man

**J**ason Leonard's easy-going approach to a mean and often brutal sporting profession leaves you wondering how so generous a spirit could possibly have spent the last seven years serving time with hard labour in his country's front row. England's pack leader seems too charitable by half; it is almost easier to imagine St Francis of Assisi as a member of the Corleone family.

Dig a little deeper, though, and you soon uncover the splinter of ice concealed beneath the sunny exterior. No one wins 50-odd caps as a prop forward without mastering the tricks of the trade, from the unfathomable to the unmentionable, and for all his relaxed geniality, the 28-year-old Harlequin is now the Big Daddy of the dressing room. When Jason speaks, the rest listen.

Strangely for a man who lists shamelessly opinionated England predecessors like Jeff Probyn, Brian Moore and John Oliver among his influences, Leonard is not much interested in talking a good game. Words come cheap, after all. Yet Jack Rowell, whose phenomenal success as a club coach at Bath owed an enormous amount to clever psychology as well as tactical intuition, regards his most experienced forward as something of a closet orator. It was to Leonard that Rowell turned during the nervous build-up to the Ireland match a fortnight ago and his choice

*'I wanted this side to be feared and respected throughout the rugby world'*

did I tell them? I told them that I wanted this side to be feared and respected throughout the rugby world. And I said that, not just because it was the sort of thing international players expect to hear in a team meeting but because I genuinely believe we have the potential to win that respect, to command that fear.

"I've been lucky enough to have played in a couple of great England sides but this one could be the best of the lot. I'm not one to brag and I have no patience with idle boasts, but I think we are capable of approaching the standards set by

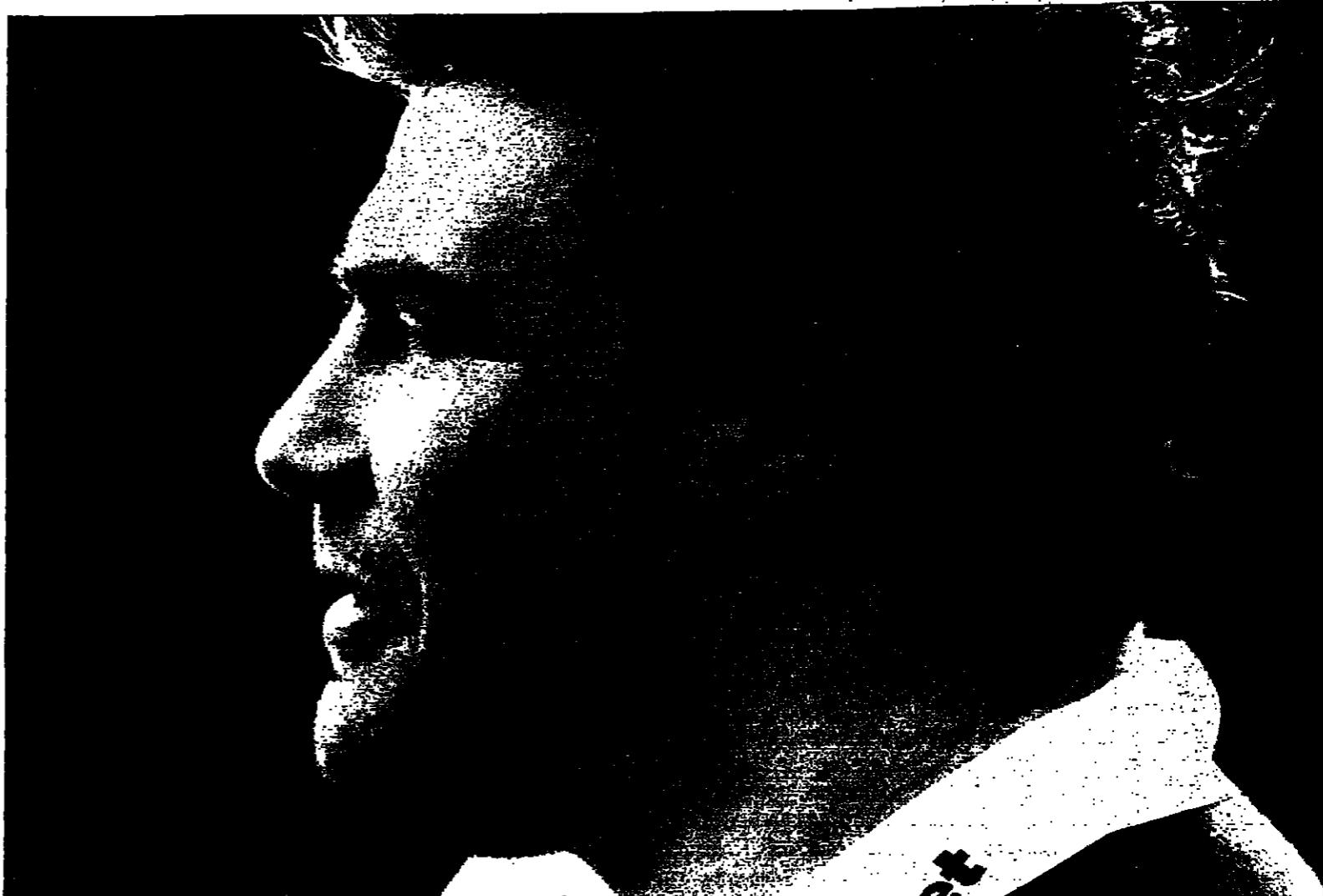
the All Blacks under Wayne Shelford in the late 1980s. Their rugby was as near perfect as dammit; they had experience and youth, strength and athleticism, pure animal instinct mixed with a touch of the cavalier. It was an explosive mix and I sense a bit of it about us.

"So, the point of Monday's little chat was to make sure everyone still appreciated exactly where we were trying to get to. You can't achieve perfection, but Shelford showed how close you can get. We've played two Five Nations matches and won both by 40 points without playing well. Sooner or later, we'll really click and do someone a lot of damage. Tomorrow would be ideal as far as I'm concerned."

For all his high-flown ambition, the phrase "feet on the ground" might have been coined for Leonard. A Quirin he may be, but there is nothing of the Eton and Cambridge in his background – mention the name Virgil to him and he is more likely to think of Thunderbird II than the *Aeneid* – and the England dressing-room is a better place for his brand of earthy realism. In an age of professional craftsmanship, the silver spoon

has few lessons for less than nothing.

Rather like Jeremy Guscott, a fellow comprehensive school type, Leonard climbed through the ranks on the back of his own raw talent to establish himself as a major player on the world stage. Today, he goes toe to toe with Christian Califano, the



The youngest Englishman to reach 50 caps, Jason Leonard knows that nothing can be taken for granted against France today

Photograph: Peter Jay

soldier from Toulouse, and there are many aficionados of the front row jungle who have the two men level pegging at the very top of the tree. "Good boy, Califano," he says with one of his soft, reflective smiles. "I'm looking forward to seeing him again."

That carefree line speaks volumes for Leonard's seemingly inexhaustible enthusiasm for life amid the bump and grind. The youngest Englishman to reach a half century of appearances, he has missed only

one match – the 1995 World Cup pool game with Western Samoa, when Rowell fielded a shadow side – since making his debut in Buenos Aires in 1990. When you consider that he suffered a ruptured disc in his neck in 1992 – the worst imaginable injury for a prop – his durability appears more impressive still.

"One of the great joys of being involved at the top level is the fact that you take something with you from every game. No matter how much you think you

know, how many times you've been in the situation before, you never go through an international without learning some sort of lesson.

"When I captained England

against Argentina in Phil

of Glamville's absence just before Christmas, I learned one of the most valuable lessons of all – namely, never to assume anything about your opposition.

We looked at the Pumas on video and at no point did we see the ball move beyond the outside-half, so we went into the

game expecting more of the same. Of course, they caught us on the hop by playing with width as well as passion and as a result, things began to go wrong.

"But what people tend to forget about that game is the result on the old scoreboard at the end. When it came down to brass tacks, we had enough discipline and enough belief to squeeze out a win. As a performance, it was fairly disappointing, as a victory, it was crucial to our confidence."

Leonard believes the feel-good factor amongst the forwards, in particular, will benefit from Rowell's commitment to continuity. "The really strong English packs of recent vintage built up their togetherness over a period of 20 or 30 internationals and I want to see this unit, which I believe possesses world-class potential, given a similar opportunity," he said.

That sort of resilience would give the boy from Barking close on 90 caps. What price the century?



Benazzi: 'Twickenham is something you remember all your life'

## A nation places its faith in Benazzi

**A**t a time when the French nation is struggling to come to terms with Le Pen xenophobia and the recent passing of another town – Vitrolles, on the Côte D'Azur – into the hands of the National Front, the presence of a Moroccan as captain of France is heavy with symbolism. Especially among the rugby community which has always cherished its image of a slightly marginal group of freebooters.

Abdelatif Benazzi, son of Zineb and Mohamed, is not only an Arab, but a practising Muslim, and proud of it. Born and raised in Oujda, near Morocco's border with Algeria, he was the unanimous choice to replace Philippe Saint-André as captain last year when the Tricolores' left-winger was forced to pull out of a Test series

**A captain's talent and strength of character have lifted him above prejudice. Ian Borthwick reports**

things in perspective. It is my driving force and, as such, very important to me."

Gifted with immense inner strength and determination, Benazzi, despite a relatively late start in the game, has risen to become one of the world's finest forwards, devastating in defence and with the ball in hand. He is one of the few players to have worn all the numbers from 4 to 8 in international football, and even today his true role remains undefined within the French XV. Second row, flanker, or No 8 he is as unclassifiable as he is indispensable to the French, and there is still a possibility that he will play half of today's game in the back row and half in the second row alongside Olivier Merle.

Benazzi first encountered rugby at the Lycée El Ouslha in Oujda, where his PT teacher, Majid Vert, a former second-rower for Morocco, convinced the powerfully built teenager to give up track and field, forget the

### Irish foil amazing Scottish recovery

Scotland produced an incredible comeback in the A international at Myreside yesterday but still came out second best, eventually losing out 34-33 to their Irish counterparts.

Down 20-7 at half-time Scotland twice took the lead but in an amazing finish, with the Scots leading 33-27 with just two minutes of normal time remaining, a pass by their stand-off, Ally Donaldson, was intercepted by Ireland's wing Niall Woods, who raced over for the try.

Michael Lynch's conversion gave Ireland their one-point win, and meant misery for Scotland who looked the better side for most of the game. They were made to pay after their weakness in the tackle gave away soft tries by Ireland's full-back Ciaran Clarke and Woods' first.

Their troubles continued in the second half when Graeme Burns' kick was charged down and a lucky bounce allowed the flanker, Eddie Halvey, to score Ireland's third easy try.

Ireland's other try was scored by Niall Hogan from a whirlwind start by his forwards and good driving play by the back row.

For Scotland, their centre Cameron Murray celebrated his first game with two tries and there were two touchdowns for his fellow centre, Ron Eriksson, dropped from the national side.

Right on full-time Emmet Farrell, on as a substitute, em-

phasised the shot and decathlon, and take up rugby. Within a year he was playing for the Moroccan Junior XV and the chain of events which led to his arrival in France reads like something out of an Arab equivalent of the Boys' Own Annual.

In 1987, Benazzi, now a full international, was on tour with Morocco in Czechoslovakia where his path crossed that of a touring Third Division French side, Luzech. The power, energy and raw natural talent of the 19-year-old was immediately noticed by club officials who rapidly invited him to come and play in France, and in a matter of months he was playing for the nearby Second Division club, Cabors. His impact was immediate, and after one season at Cahors he transferred to Agen, one of the 17 First Division clubs which attempted to lure him away in the off-season.

Overcoming the racism and distrust which first greeted his ar-

rival in this traditional bastion of French rugby became one of Benazzi's first major victories and now, six years later and with 51 international caps to his credit, he has not only risen to the rank of captain of Agen, but also to that of a genuine local hero.

He has nevertheless remained close to his Arab roots, despite the gargantuan after-match festivities associated with rugby in south-west France. He never drinks alcohol, remains a devout Muslim, and even attempted to observe Ramadan despite the fact that it inevitably falls in the most rigorous part of the rugby season. "I now know that it is impossible to respect Ramadan and play top-level sport at the same time. So I cheat a little, and for all those days where I cheat I make them up later in the year, observing the fast from dawn to dusk."

His captaincy of the French team remains as discreet and understated as the rest of his personality. Benazzi never raises his voice, but despite the inevitable trace of the North African accent so often ridiculed in France, his size, aura and burning black eyes are sufficient to ensure respect. As for today's match against England, Benazzi places it a cut above the other games of the championship. "One of the things I will be saying to the younger players who have never played in England, is that a game at Twickenham is something you will remember all your life. We know the English will start as favourites, but in that sense we have nothing to lose. I will simply ask the players to give it all they have got, to try everything so that at least we don't come off the field feeling frustrated."

He is conscious, however,

of the scrappy nature of France's

two early games, and of the

disturbing number of handling errors which has prevented them

from getting their game going.

"In a match like this anything can happen," he insists. "We tried a lot of things against Wales, but we also made a lot of mistakes.

Our support play was poor,

and at times we were just trying too hard, being too hasty to allow

things to fall in place. We will be

looking to eliminate all those

small imperfections from our

game. But, above all, we are de-

termined not to sit back and just

watch England play."

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Scotland's fitful form since Arwel Thomas's failed touchline conversion left them three-quarters of the way to a Grand Slam twelve months ago has simply underscored the bottom line that Richie Dixon, the national team coach, has a dearth of world-class talent at his disposal. That stark reality was exposed by Australia and Italy before Christmas and exploited by Wales, with their three-try scoring burst in five second-half minutes at Murrayfield in January, and by England at Twickenham this weekend.

At least Tait's return to the union fold, with Newcastle, has afforded the Scottish selectors an

other midfield option. Jeffrey's

one-time Kelso comrade sug-

gested his influential per-

formance in Scotland's 56-11

submerging of an "Emerging

Wales" in January that he will

have much to offer in his cent-

reigning with Gregor Townsend,

even as a 32-year-old who made

his original international debut

as a replacement for John Rutherford in the World Cup

match against France in Christchurch ten years ago.

Much has been made this week of Tait's second coming. Much too much, in fact. As the captain, Wainwright, put it yesterday: "Some people seem to be expecting miracles from

him."

Wainwright, who moves to his

favoured blind-side position in

Scotland's back row this af-

ternoon, might have added that

more than one re-converted

Welshman breathed new life

into the old dragon at Murrayfield six weeks ago. The great Scotts, Quinell and Gibbs, and Allan Bateman, were also in the Welsh team which subsequently had its tail bitten off by its legs by the Irish. Fortunately for Scotland, the false dawn syndrome was transmuted to the victory in Cardiff that day.

Brian Ashton arrived in Ed-

inburgh on Thursday with his

six-year contract but with a

team to train. Considering

that Eric Miller, Eric Elwood

and Nick Popplewell have, since

the Arms Park game, been ad-

ded to a casualty list which al-

ready included Simon Geoghegan

and Keith Wood, the former

Wales coach could be said to have swapped the Rec for the wicks.

The wound of most immedi-

ate concern to Ashton, though,

is the one that was inflicted by

the 17 men who played for the

land of his fathers at Lansdowne

Road a fortnight ago. The dan-

gerous five tries conceded in

that final 16-minute slaughter

could have painful im-

plications if Scotland make an

early breakthrough this after-

noon.

Richard

Wainwright, who moves to his

favoured blind-side position in

Scotland's back row this af-

# RFU urged not to let TV undermine tradition

English rugby yesterday received a warning from an unlikely quarter that it had to tread carefully when allowing its game to be televised to a limited audience.

While the Celtic nations this week signed lucrative broadcasting deals with terrestrial television companies, England have committed themselves to a five-year contract with BSkyB.

The warning about the dangers of deals with satellite or cable television companies came from a leading representative of a sport which pioneered razzmatazz, hype and schedules tailored to suit television companies – American football.

Gridiron has seen it all, done it all, marketed the video and the whole range of leisureware and now, by all accounts, is ready to trumpet the pitfalls, problems and growing pains of professionalism to rugby union. And there were plenty of willing ears in the Queen Elizabeth II



Farr-Jones: Fears burn-out

Conference Centre in London yesterday at a seminar on the future of rugby, organised by *Rugby News* magazine in association with the *Independent*.

A turbulent season faces the field in the English game after further storms. A third special general meeting in 15 months is scheduled for next Sunday

where, once again, the Rugby Football Union's authority and constitution will be challenged. Yesterday's conference, which featured a series of eminent speakers, was, therefore, a welcome forum for views to be expressed and potential problems to be highlighted. And the National Football League has had its problems.

Dan Rooney is well qualified to speak authoritatively on running a professional game. Since graduating from college as a business major, he has worked in the family firm, the Pittsburgh Steelers gridiron team. He has seen at first hand the issues raised by professionalism and, while concluding that it was no bad thing, he still made some pertinent points.

"Television has brought sport into everyone's living-room," Rooney said. "But rugby union must remain in control. You have a marvellous tradition and I think we owe our game a debt of gratitude since I believe

rugby is the root of gridiron.

In the 1930s, Pittsburgh Steelers had to pay a local radio station to cover their matches. In the 1960s, by which time television was involved, broadcasting revenue to the NFL was \$300,000 with spectators figures for the whole season in all matches at around one million.

"By the 1997 season, revenue from television had gone up to \$23 million.

"These days television is responsible for the greatest slice of revenue, some two-thirds of the NFL's income is TV-generated.

Gate money is less than one-third, while stadium revenue through concessions, franchises and marketing, is increasing."

While accepting the value of

television as a source of income and acknowledging that satellite TV is able to reach places around the world where gridiron had never before been seen, Rooney pointed out that satellite dishes were still not that numerous.

He added: "Don't isolate your local [i.e. terrestrial] networks. Games must remain on local television. When a Steelers match is being shown on cable, it is broadcast simultaneously on a terrestrial station. TV fans are not always prepared to pay to view."

Rooney felt that television wanted to promote sport. "TV is not the enemy," he said. "But they have to make programming good. It is an excellent medium for creating new spectators. But the television

package that is negotiated must leave control with the governing body. The sport must be responsible, for example, for the timing of the game and for the number of interruptions for commercial breaks."

Rooney advocated that the leading clubs and governing bodies should negotiate together for the benefit of the brotherhood. That theme of *esprit de corps* was echoed by another distinguished speaker, the former Australian captain Nick Farr-Jones, who lamented, among other things in the new professional era, the passing of the traditional Australian green and gold strip.

Farr-Jones, now based in France and working in banking, described the new version as: "a vomit of green and gold splashed on white," adding: "that is what our new sponsor insisted on".

Farr-Jones also feared burn-out in the modern player. "I understand that the need to play more games to generate more income," he said. "But there are now around 12 to 14 internationals a year for Australia.

"And look at training. We did three nights a week and perhaps a little extra on our own. My state, New South Wales, brought its players together in October, four to five months before the start of the new season."

And these guys are expected to train 10 times a week. I believe this is overkill."

While stating that the modern-day game is in good shape, Farr-Jones expressed his fear for what happens when a player retires, particularly if the player's only qualification is playing rugby. This was a theme echoed by the former England full-back Jon Callard who called for youngsters to be encouraged to stay on at school and then to train for another profession while in full-time employment with professional rugby clubs.

The conference was welcomed by Tony Hall, the RFU secretary. "I think this should become an annual affair," he said. "It gives a lot of sections of the game an ideal opportunity to express and share their views. It is also a good chance for the RFU to signal its achievements and stance in the game, particularly in a time when there is so much misinformation around."

## The return of a fallen hero

Glyn Leach on the rapid rise and slow decline of Sugar Ray Leonard, who makes yet another comeback tonight

**L**ike a moth drawn to a flame, Sugar Ray Leonard, now a 40-year-old grandfather, tonight returns to the ring in Atlantic City after a six-year absence. The modern-day boxing legend aims to turn back the clock through victory over the flamboyant Hector "Macho" Camacho, the defender of the lightly regarded International Boxing Council middleweight championship.

Leonard's love-hate relationship with the sport is well known. A professional career following a gold medal at the Montreal Olympics of 1976 has seen Leonard fight just 39 times (including two losses and one draw) in 20 years, statistics put into perspective by those of 80s contemporaries Thomas Hearns (62 fights), Marvin Hagler (67 fights) and Roberto Duran (112 fights).

Of the quartet whose memorable rivalry sustained the sport throughout a depressing mid-80s slump, only Hagler has walked into the sunset never to look back. Hearns and Duran have kept plugging away, diminishing their reputations by the fight.

Leonard, though, has retired six times to date, always to return: the first retirement following his Olympic success; the latest after Terry Norris brutally battered him for 12 rounds in February 1991, prompting one American journalist to describe the beaten Leonard as "slaggering from the Madison Square Garden ring like a mugging victim".

A detached retina, a period

of cocaine abuse, the lack of challenge, all have caused Leonard to retire in the past, yet always he has found justification to return. But why now, at an age where he feels it prudent to undergo yearly prostate examinations, does Leonard feel driven to risk his health and reputation once more?

Not through financial necessity. Leonard hardly needs the \$5m (£3.2m) he receives for challenging Camacho, who

missed Leonard and Trainer went their own way, forgoing promotional alignments and fighting for the highest bidder, earning over \$100m to date.

Neither is this comeback through lack of achievement. He was inducted into the Boxing Hall of Fame five years ago. Leonard has won six world titles in five weight divisions, a record beaten only by Hearns.

It is the search for approval, for adulation, that brings Leonard back and boxing has, since his teenage years, provided both. As a frail, timid youth in Palmer Park, Maryland, whose only sporting aspiration was to be a gymnast, Leonard was something of an embarrassment to his father, Cicero. But when the youngest of the Leonard brothers took up boxing and showed promise, the dysfunction disappeared from the father-son relationship.

Boredom also plays a part. A career in television commentary, a spell as "boxing ambassador" for a Las Vegas hotel-casino — Leonard's sole duty being to play a few rounds of golf with the establishment's high-roller customers — and the launching of a foundation for underprivileged children, none replaced the adrenaline rush of the boxing ring.

"Fighters are a rare breed. We don't even think we slow down," Leonard said. "I guarantee if you polled 12 fighters and asked if they could beat Roy Jones Jr., they'd say yes. Because, if you don't believe you can, you already lost. And, yes, I believe I

earn \$2m. Leonard and his attorney, Mike Trainer, have maintained total financial independence from day one. The investors who paid \$1,000 apiece to get Leonard's career up and running were repaid from the proceeds of his first professional fight and summary dis-

missed. Leonard and Trainer

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# Newcastle went barking mad, but the referee allowed the goal; there is nothing in the FA rulebook about the intervention of dogs

As Leicester discovered on Wednesday night, anybody can make a mistake – although that is little consolation when you are three minutes from a penalty shoot-out and the possibility of qualifying for the FA Cup quarter-finals, and that “anybody” is the match referee.

And what is so frustrating is that the referee, like the customer, is always right – even when he is wrong. I mean, how often have you heard a referee admitting he cocked up? Exactly. It is as rare as an East Five win to hear an official admit, as Ian Burrell once did, to the former Crystal Palace manager, Alan Smith: “I’m having a crap game and nothing you say will change it.”

Even more worryingly, referees often reveal totally different priorities to the rest of us, as David Elleray proved last year when he said: “I do like Selhurst Park. There’s a Sainsbury next to the ground where

I can do the weekend shopping.” So while Mike Reed’s mistake in awarding a penalty against Leicester for a foul that television revealed as a dive has inevitably raised the clamour for the introduction of video evidence, his is simply the latest in a long line of referees bailing out of a game as a sloping pitch.

Who could ever forget the appalling decisions that resulted in Maradona’s infamous “hand of God” goal; Ronald Koeman getting off scot-free to end England’s hopes of qualifying for USA 94 (and Graham Taylor’s England career); Jeff Astle denying Leeds the 1971 championship; Harald Schumacher’s unpunished assault on Patrick Battiston at the 1982 World Cup in Spain; and the Romanian goal that never was in Euro ’96?

But far more bizarre – if admittedly less significant – was the goal

scored by a dog against Newcastle Town in the Staffordshire Sunday Cup in November 1985. Stoke side Knave of Clubs were 2-0 down when one of their players hopelessly misfired his shot from 15 yards out – whereupon a dog ran on to the field and showed Duncan Ferguson his prowess in rising to head the ball into the net. Newcastle justifiably went barking mad, but the referee allowed the goal: apparently there is nothing in the FA rulebook about the intervention of dogs.

There are rules, however, about the intervention by referee or linesman. So when the referee inadvertently deflected the ball into the net during a crucial 1968 match between Barrow and Plymouth Argyle, the goal stood, sending Barrow to the top of the Third Division (although the goal was later credited to a Barrow striker to save the referee’s embarrassment).

Olivia Blair



ON SATURDAY

But nothing could save the embarrassment of David Alison who, in 1983, booked Southampton’s Danny Wallace for a foul that was actually committed by Jimmy Case, and then compounded his crime by sending Wallace off for a second bookable offence. Alison should never have made the mistake in the first

place considering Case was 5ft 9in. 12st and white while Wallace was 5ft 4in. nine-and-a-half stone and black.

The Danish referee Henning Erikstrup was not even looking when he disallowed a goal in a game between Nocrager and Ebeltoft in 1964. Nocrager were 4-3 up when Erikstrup’s false teeth fell out as he prepared to blow the final whistle. As he bent down to pick them up Ebeltoft equalised. Erikstrup disallowed the goal; he argued that while he had not actually blown, the 90 minutes were up and he “had to get my teeth back before some player put his big foot on them”.

Then there was the referee who booked a mute player for foul and abusive language... and a certain Mr Kirkham who, having arrived 45 minutes late to referee a game between Derby and Sunderland in 1894, took the law into his own hands and ordered it to be restarted.

Derby, who had been 3-0 up at the time, scored three more goals only for Sunderland to hit five in what was literally a game of three halves.

Mr WP Harper was doggedly unrepentant when the official allowed a Newcastle goal to stand against Arsenal in the 1972 FA Cup final, even though the ball had clearly gone out of play en route to goal. “It was a goal... as God is my judge. I was eight yards away,” he claimed. Stills from British Movie News show that the ball was definitely out and that Harper was 20 yards away. It was a case of compensation to Arsenal; the record shows they missed out on the Double that year.

Belgium, meanwhile, missed out on progressing to the next stage of USA ’94 thanks to the Swiss referee Kurt Röthlisberger, who failed to award either a penalty or send off the German defender Thomas Helmer for

bringing down Josip Wehr in the 76th minute of their group match, with Germany leading 3-2. Röthlisberger admitted his mistake on the back of video evidence and was discarded by Fifa since he was “nearing retirement age anyway” – which must have made the Belgians wonder what he was doing there in the first place.

So Mike Reed is by no means the only guilty party. But just a word of warning to those who favour video evidence as a means of judging such decisions. After the Corinthian player Edmundo was sent off for striking a Santos defender during Brazil’s 1995-96 season, bungling club officials brought the wrong tape to the subsequent hearing, forcing the disciplinary committee to sit through 30 minutes of *The Adventures of Scooby Doo*.

Which just goes to show that referees are not the only ones who can make a dog’s dinner of things.

## Coppell's return to combat

### Football

NICHOLAS HARLING

his departure was down to ill-health, I think that is just something Manchester City put out.”

Francis Lee, the City chairman, was clearly taken aback by yesterday’s news. “I have to say that I am surprised, but we at Manchester City wish him all the best,” he said.

Back at Selhurst Park, Coppell said: “I know the players here, the supporters and the personnel. I feel comfortable here.”

Coppell had already been doing some scouting work for Palace in recent weeks and this is his third appointment by the club. Noades employed him for the first time in 1984 following Bassett’s about-turn three days after leaving Wimbledon. Having resigned following Palace’s relegation from the Premiership in 1993, Coppell returned as technical director two years later before leaving for Manchester City last October.

While expectations may be slightly lower at Palace than at Manchester City, Coppell did not give that as the reason why he was prepared to return to management. In announcing his departure from Maine Road in November “on medical grounds”, Coppell had said: “I have suffered for some time from the huge pressure I have imposed on myself. Since my appointment this has completely overwhelmed me to such an extent that I can’t function in the job in the way I would like to.”

Yesterday Coppell refused to talk about his time at City, saying only: “It’s over, done with, finished. I was in a foaming wilderness after that, but now I’ve got the opportunity to get my teeth into something.”

The comments of Ron Noades, the Palace chairman, provided further confusion. Although it was Coppell himself who had announced to the world that he was leaving City because of “the huge pressure”, Noades insisted: “The situation at Maine Road was all paper talk. Steve never got the chance to defend himself against the allegations of pressure and Manchester City massaged the situation to satisfy their supporters. I don’t think



Ron Noades, the Palace chairman, welcome his new manager Steve Coppell (left) yesterday

Photograph: Rebecca Naden/PA

### Guppy back with O’Neill at Leicester

Port Vale’s talented winger, Steve Guppy, yesterday signed for Leicester City in a £50,000 move, writes Alan Nixon. The deal could rise to £100,000 depending upon appearances.

The 27-year-old joined Port Vale from Newcastle United in November 1994 for £25,000 and began his League career playing for the Leicester City manager, Martin O’Neill, at Wycombe.

Mike Reed, the referee at the centre of the penalty controversy which ended Leicester’s FA Cup hopes, has revealed he was confronted by furious fans after the 1-0 defeat by Chelsea.

Reed, 43, was trapped in his car after the match at Stamford Bridge, which was decided by Reed’s extra-time penalty award.

He said fans abused him and thumped him at traffic lights near the ground.

The former Aston Villa striker, Dafydd Atkinson, has been training with Manchester City but might have to return to his flukish club, Fleetwood.

Goalkeepers will find their job specifications altered if certain rule changes are approved in Belfast by the International Board today. The most likely changes are allowing the keeper to move on his line for penalties, and extending the pass-back rule to include throw-ins.

Both teams will be desperate for a points revival under Pearce but are still in one of the

injured Alan Shearer and beat

### Pearce on the prowl

Stuart Pearce should be a happy man today. Nottingham Forest’s caretaker player-manager has made it clear that he does not welcome the media attention which his new role has brought, but the cameras at this afternoon’s Premiership match against Tottenham Hotspur are likely to be directed elsewhere.

After a week of dramatic change at Forest, much of the attention at White Hart Lane will be focused on Dave Bassett, the club’s new general manager, and Irving Scholar, who is one of the key figures behind the consortium which won control of Forest this week.

Bassett and Pearce may be the Londoners returning to the capital, but nobody in the Forest camp will feel more at home today than Scholar, who was Tottenham’s chairman until he was replaced by Alan Sugar six years ago. Scholar, a Tottenham fan since his schooldays, once said that he loved the club “as much as anyone in my family”.

Scholar agrees that “it will be very strange” to be supporting the visitors today and added: “The last match I was involved in was the 1991 Cup final, when Tottenham beat Nottingham Forest, and that my first match will be at Tottenham, I have to admit, a little bit spooky.”

Both teams will be desperate for a points revival under Pearce but are still in one of the

relegation positions, while Tottenham have won only one of their last seven matches.

Southampton. Yesterday, Kenny Dalglish shrugged off the absence of Shearer, who had his third groin operation inside a year this week. “Injuries and suspensions are part and parcel of the game,” Dalglish said, “and Alan’s misfortune will be someone else’s good fortune.”

The championship is in danger of becoming a three-horse race as Arsenal struggle to recover their form of last autumn. Arsène Wenger’s team face a tricky match at Everton, although they may welcome a chance to pull clear of the two teams below them. Middlesbrough and Southampton, who face difficult away matches against Sheffield Wednesday and Newcastle United respectively.

The two teams above Forest also travel. West Ham going to Leeds and Gordon Strachan taking Coventry to visit Manchester United, one of his former clubs. Victory will put United, the Premiership leaders, four points clear of second-placed Liverpool, who travel tomorrow to Aston Villa. Newcastle, meanwhile, can move within two points of Liverpool if they overcome the team immediately beneath them in the table, Blackburn.

Wimbledon, still going strong on three fronts, will hope to strengthen their challenge for a UEFA Cup place when they entertain Leicester. Joe Kiernan, the Wimbledon manager, said yesterday that money was available to strengthen his squad, and because of injuries and suspensions he intended to do so.

Leicester and last year’s two other clubs promoted from the First Division, Derby and Sunderland, have all performed above most observers’ expectations this season, but none of the trio, who occupy 12th, 13th and 14th places in the table, are safe.

Derby face a difficult match today at home to their fellow FA Cup quarter-finalists, Chelsea, while Sunderland play away to within two points of Liverpool if they overcome the team immediately beneath them in the table, Blackburn.

Also enjoying the breezy, 18

knot winds was the crew of Tim Barrett’s Mutant 36. Bradamante. With the 1990 Olympic silver medallists, John Merricks and Ian Walker, steering and calling tactics, aided by 1992 the 470 Olympian Andy Hemmings trimming sails, they showed good downwind speed to take two second places.

Completing the picture, Graham Walker’s 45ft Indulgence made up for a fifth place in the third race, the Olympic helmman, Andy Beardsworth took Easy Oars, the former American team yacht Pig in Space, to a close-fought third race and then led from start to finish in the fourth.

The 14 yachts in the BT Challenge begin the fourth leg from Sydney to Cape Town tomorrow.

### Easy Oars soars

Sailing

Tony Buckingham’s 40ft Easy Oars led the celebrations for the British trio of 1997 Admirals Cup boats as they put in another set of solid performances at the SORC regatta in Miami, writes Stuart Alexander.

Despite gear failure in the third race of a five-day series, the Olympic helmman, Andy Beardsworth took Easy Oars, the former American team yacht Pig in Space, to a close-fought third race and then led from start to finish in the fourth.

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**Bittersweet Sugar**  
Glyn Leach on the return of  
a fallen hero, page 29

# sport

**Parkes takes care**  
Guy Hodgson meets  
unworried of Ewood, page 30

**FIVE NATIONS' CHAMPIONSHIP:** Time for De Glanville to command centre stage at Twickenham for title decider against Tricolores



Jack Rowell (second left) watches his England charges run through their line-out routine under the sweep of Twickenham's stands yesterday in readiness for this afternoon's meeting with France

Photograph: David Ashdown

## England wary of unfamiliar French

CHRIS HEWETT

Rugby Union Correspondent

Olivier Merle's sudden occupation of the moral high ground has provoked so much laughter on this side of the Channel that England might be forgiven for thinking that the French have finally relinquished their notoriously tentative grip on rugby reality. They would be mistaken. Twickenham will be no place for complacent assumptions this afternoon.

There is no doubt that England can win – and win well – for they have seen off better French sides than this in recent years. If Abdel Benazzi, the visiting captain, is to be believed, the French have only a 30 per cent chance of victory – a figure that just about equates with the suspected fitness level of Benazzi's hugely influential outside-half, Alain Penaud – and it will come as no great surprise

if the Red Rose is in full bloom come the final whistle.

But as Tim Rodber, the England No 8, said yesterday, the unfamiliarity of the French line-out only adds to the potential pitfalls lying in the path of the favourites. Had Emile Ntamack, Philippe Saint-André, Thomas Castaignede and Richard Dourthe been strutting their stuff across the greensward, England would have known what to expect. By comparison, the likes of Laurent Leflamand and David Venditti are, for the time being at least, spectres in the darkness.

The danger for England is that they simply cannot predict how the French will approach what amounts to a Five Nations title decider. Benazzi, a great back-row forward in anyone's language, is hard-headed enough to take the pragmatic line (pragmatic? – a French swearword surely). On the other hand, he may just throw caution to the wind on the

basis that his side have far less to lose than their opponents. Now that really would be worth watching. Penaud and Venditti apart, there are two other members of the Brive back division on view and if Philippe Carbonneau and Christophe Lamaison enjoy anything like the space given to them by Leicester in the final of the Heineken Cup in January, England will be playing for pride rather than a Grand Slam when they reach Cardiff in a fortnight's time.

The right attitude will be of the essence for both sides, which brings us neatly back to Monsieur Merle, the man mountain from Montferrand via Grenoble. His view of the English rugby mentality – "very unappealing, for their players are arrogant and pretentious" – might carry more clout were it not for his own reputation as an Al-pissed liquidator with an over-active right fist. As Ricky Evans, an

aggrieved Welsh prop, is prepared to testify in court, Merle is no one's idea of a "play up and play the game" traditionalist.

It is, though, true to say that

the French have taken some public steps towards cleaning up their act. Merle, Dourthe and Franck Tournaire have all been suspended for violent transgressions during the past

three seasons and those efforts are in stark contrast to England's under-the-curtain approach. The Rugby Football Union will not want to hear this, but the French are getting it right more often than most these days.

Sensibly, both Jack Rowell, the England coach, and Phil de Glanville, his captain, have spent much of the last week emphasising the supreme importance of discipline. "We became involved in a few things that would have been better avoided during the first few minutes in Dublin a fortnight back and it's essential that we steer clear of that trap against the French," said De Glanville, whose powers of leadership were rightly extolled by Rowell earlier in the week.

Today's match could scarcely be more important from De Glanville's point of view. Omitted from the preliminary Lions squad of 62 and heavily criticised in some quarters for the

perceived anonymity of his international performances, he must prove to his doubters – Fran Cotton included – that he can do more than simply organise the players around him. To be blunt, he needs to catch the eye on centre stage rather than pull a few strings from behind the curtain.

As so often this season, untimely injury has hindered the captain's preparation. The ankle problems that affected De Glanville earlier this week are said to have cleared, but then Penaud is reported by the French to be in the pink as well. The black arts of disinformation are as rife in rugby as in every other walk of life and it will be no shock if both Jeremy Guscott and David Aucagne, the talented stand-off from Paul, make it off the bench and onto the pitch.

With a young English pack showing early signs of impending greatness, De Glanville and his fellow backs should see

more than enough of the ball to secure victory and thus set up a mighty finale at Cardiff Arms Park. Although the French back row looks a class unit, especially now that Olivier Magne is involved on a full-time basis, the home trio showed enough against Ireland to suggest that they will shade it in the loose.

Equally, it is hard to see the French tight forwards forcing Jason Leonard and company into their shells, especially as there is no Olivier Roumat to test Simon Shaw's mettle in the middle of the line-out.

Perhaps more than in any other match this season, the first 15 minutes hold the key. Five weeks ago, Brive caught Leicester so cold that by the time the Tigers realised they had a game on their hands, it had already slipped away. If England can hit the ground running, they should avoid a similar fate.

Leonard and Benazzi profiles, Scots look to Tel, page 28

## American football could provide model

DAVID LLEWELLYN

Rugby union was yesterday invited to adopt American football's salary capping system and also to seek backing from international companies. Dan Rooney, the president of Pittsburgh Steelers, speaking at a seminar in London on the state

of the game, insisted that salary capping was the only fair system to ensure that no club went broke through exorbitant wage demands, and that the wealthier clubs did not have a bottomless barrel.

"It is important to get everyone on the same wage," said Rooney, who had interrupted a busy schedule to speak at the

seminar, organised by *Rugby News* magazine in association with *The Independent*.

"The way it works is that the teams pool their gross revenue in a season, and that is shared equally among all 30 teams," Rooney explained. While no maximum wage operates in the NFL there is a minimum level.

Although the salary cap

appealed to the Rugby Football Union secretary, Tony Hallatt, also at the seminar, he said it would be difficult, if not impossible, to enforce from a legal and practical point of view.

Rooney invited English clubs to seek overseas investment. He claimed the United Kingdom provides more visitors to Disney World in Florida than any other

country. He also revealed that the Disney Corporation is in the process of building a sports complex. "You have to deal with an international sponsor," he said.

"You have to align yourselves with, for example, telephone companies, breweries, banks and the leisure industry as well as major players such as the Heinz corporation. Disney

and Sony. Television has opened the door to advertising and sponsors."

Whether more English clubs have the courage to follow the example of Harlequins and seek international funding – they are sponsored by NEC – remains to be seen but the invitation and opportunity exists.

Seminar report, page 29

In Monday's 20-page sports section

Phil Shaw talks to Steve Bull, the local hero of the Black Country

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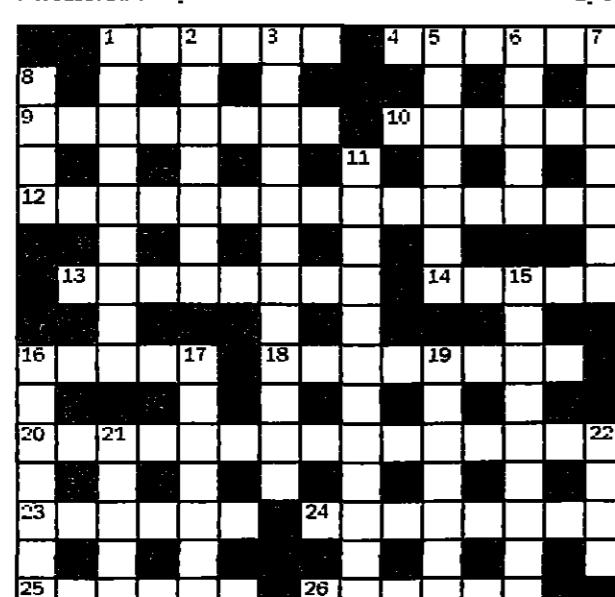
### THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3235, Saturday 1 March

By Phi

ACROSS

DOWN



Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution

MESSES EXPENSES  
PUNISHED  
SIDEBOARDS OMAR  
CALAMITY MUSTER  
SPED LOLLIPOPS  
SORENESS CONK  
TEEPHEE NUMERATE  
EDDA INDPOSED  
ARDENTLY DISMAL

MULINATIONAL  
OFFENDING TIE IN  
ZDL EWK LE  
LEEDS EXEMPLARY  
P LD DE NW T R N P B O  
T W W U I A  
HUMBLEST PAGAN  
BASED EMITHESE  
UNDERONESNOSE

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive handpicked copies of the new Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your name, postcode, last name's initials, address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address, and a brief biography of yourself. Last word's winner: Mr. Nicholas Lonsdale, J Thorpe, Hadden, K Smith, Saltairne & Knowles, Preston, J Spivack, Harrow.

## ICC chief wants Test world championship

### Cricket

A formally recognised Test cricket world championship, first proposed by the *Independent* four years ago, could be place by the end of the year.

Speaking in Johannesburg during the first Test between South Africa and Australia David Richards, the chief executive of the International Cricket Council, said yesterday that he would be seeking assurances from all nine Test playing nations that a formalised world championship would have their backing.

The next ICC meeting is in Kuala Lumpur on March 23 and once we've agreed in principle it's just a question of juggling fixtures to make sure that all the countries play each other home and away over, perhaps a four-year period," he said.

The *Independent* suggested a system with points awarded for winning and drawing Test matches, away wins worth twice as many points as those at home, and bonus points awarded for series victories.

Matthew Engel, the editor of *Wisden*, recently suggested an alternative system whereby a team winning a series would get two

points, one point for a draw and no points for a lost series. The points system suggested by Matthew Engel seems to be the simplest," Richards said.

Richards added: "There is a feeling that we need to reaffirm what the players feel about the importance and status of Test cricket and a world championship would certainly raise its profile. The ICC cannot limit the number of one-day games played around the world – that is up to each individual country – but both Mark Taylor and Hansie Cronje [captains of Australia and South Africa, respectively] have expressed their concerns to me about the hectic nature of modern playing schedules."

The England management has agreed to allow wives and girlfriends to join the players during the tour to the West Indies next year, the itinerary for which was announced yesterday. The tour will also allow more time for rest and preparation than the tours to Zimbabwe and New Zealand. The party will acclimatise in Antigua before travelling to Jamaica for the first Test.

S. Africa fight back, page 29  
West Indies tour itinerary, Sporting Digest, page 31

THE INDEPENDENT TABLE OF TEST CRICKET

Team	Home	Away	Total
England	10	10	20
South Africa	10	10	20
Australia	10	10	20
India	10	10	20
New Zealand	10	10	20
Zimbabwe	10	10	20
West Indies	10	10	20
Kenya	10	10	20
Kenya	10	10	20

Sensible suggestion: The *Independent* proposed its blueprint for a Test world championship in June 1993

